

2 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The problems of too much well-oiled living

IN DISPARAGING Colin J Campbell's warning that the world is on the eve of an historic discontinuity because it is running out of the abundant cheap oil on which it has come to depend, George F Will writes: "The task of finding the gloomy dimension of declining oil prices is testing the ingenuity of the Cassandra class" (Scraping the bottom of the barrel, March 29).

Nonsense. The gloom is pervasive, although perhaps too much well-oiled living has rendered Will's vision insensitive to it. Declining oil prices will prompt higher oil consumption worldwide. This will result in more driving, accompanied by higher levels of acid rain, smog, road accidents, injuries and premature deaths. There will also be a rise in the consumption of plastics and other petrochemical products. Unless current methods of making, using and disposing of these products are modified, the net effect will be to release more toxic substances into the environment. Also, extracting and transporting the extra oil will probably cause more spills, controlling reserves may involve more wars, and burning the extra oil is sure to strengthen the greenhouse effect.

Will waxes lyrical about the United States having the world's "largest supply" of freedom, but ignores the fact that in practice millions of Americans no longer have the freedom not to drive nor to breathe the clean air.

Worse, Will demonstrates scant comprehension of the degree to which global civilisation is dependent on oil, and of the dilemma that this puts us in: we can keep being profligate with oil until we poison or broil ourselves to death, or until we

run out and face famine. Avoiding either scenario is possible, but it will require more than freedom and scientific creativity.

In referring to those who don't share his glib optimism as "the Cassandra class", Will exposes the hollowness of his musings. The Cassandra of Greek myth received the gift of true prophecy from Apollo — who also decreed that she would not be believed. It doesn't take a prophet to foretell that our love affair with petroleum will end in tears, but true ingenuity is required to maintain the degree of selective ignorance and myopia that allows Will to take such a rosy view of what has become a singularly harmful culture of dependence.

Tim Groves,
Kyoto, Japan

States of the Union

CYPRUS clearly cannot be considered for European Union membership while the present situation remains (Cook's fudge keeps late partners sweet, March 22). It is a ludicrous pretence that the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus represents the Turkish Cypriot community, or the island as a whole.

The independent, multi-cultural Republic of Cyprus was overthrown by the Greek colonists in the coup of 1974. Britain, as guarantor of Cyprus's independent status along with Greece and Turkey, chose to do nothing, despite having two huge military bases and thousands of troops on the spot. Turkey had no option but to act to safeguard the

Turkish Cypriot population on the island, since Nicos Sampson, who had overthrown the government of Archbishop Makarios, was committed to union with Greece, which would have meant ethnic cleansing of the Turkish Cypriot population. It is clear that by its inaction Britain, and probably Nato, were happy to conspire in this plot to get rid of Makarios, who was considered pro-Soviet.

The domestic political situation in Cyprus must be stabilised. This means one of three options: a federal Cypriot republic with autonomous Greek and Turkish states; universal recognition of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus as an equal, legitimate entity alongside the Greek Republic of Cyprus; or union of the Greek Cypriot Republic with Greece and integration of the northern Turkish Cypriot Republic with Turkey. Any of these options is preferable to the status quo.

John Papantonios,
London

THE Guardian Weekly seems to be in favour of eventual Turkish membership of the EU (Editorial, March 22). But that would mean a common frontier with unstable countries such as Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Georgia and Syria. Who needs that? The EU's southeastern border would become much more difficult to defend, expanding from a couple of hundred kilometres in Thrace to about 1,500km in Asia Minor.

General Wesley Clark, secretary-general Javier Solana and other Nato officials have recently been in Austria trying to persuade that country to apply for Nato membership, in spite of Austria's promise in 1955 to stay neutral. In a speech to the Institute for Political and Strategic Studies in Vienna, Gen Clark said that "we see increasing challenges to security in Europe in the southeast". So let us keep our southeastern border short in Europe rather than long in Asia.

Michael Grot,
London

Rich pickings for big business

GEORGE MONBIOT'S article "Give us this day our toxic bread" (March 22) dealt with the proposed ruling by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) over the definition of "organic" foods. Monbiot tells us that the new definition of "organic foods" would include foods that are anything but.

It may be true, as Monbiot contends, that the USDA is acting on behalf of large producers who do not wish to lose any share of their market, rather than on behalf of the public. While citizens of the US have ways to make their influence felt on the municipal and state level, the federal government is pretty well in the hands of pressure groups, substantially beyond the reach of the public.

An excellent example is the overwhelming desire of voters to reform the campaign financing system. This "system" now requires millions of television advertising dollars to be raised for election to the House of Representatives and many more millions for the election of a senator or the president. There is no evidence that there will be any kind of reform, but each political party will blame the other for doing nothing.

It is certainly worthwhile to publicise as widely as possible the failure of the USDA to do its duty, but it is unlikely to bring results.

It would be better if the various organisations of farmers and consumers could agree on reasonable standards. As soon as this is accomplished, an attractive logo could be chosen and registered as a "service-mark" (similar to a trademark) in every country where the new association of organic farmers and consumers is active. After a while consumers will look for the logo and the word "organic" will have the same status as "new" or "improved" in adverts.

John Lehnert,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

AGRI-BUSINESS in the US must be feeling very threatened by the organic food industry if it is taking such desperate measures to strangle it. The strategy seems to be: "Let's kill off those competitors who don't follow our destructive farming practices or buy our fertilisers, pesticides etc, and suppress public debate because we want to be allowed to continue to get rich by poisoning the soil, water and wildlife."

Even though the organic industry is growing rapidly as more people take responsibility for their own health and that of the planet, the USDA is blatantly going against these positive steps to more sustainable living by supporting the recent despotic actions of big business.

It is time for the world to stand up to the US and boycott the genetically engineered food that America will be allowed to label as "organic" in the future, if the USDA has its way. Otherwise, what good is "free speech" and "free trade" if we aren't even allowed to choose what food to eat?

Gaeoer McAlister,
Sydney, NSW, Australia

Slicing up trade with Africa

WHILE Bill Clinton calls the shots on his African trade tour, Nelson Mandela has the insight to expose the United States as an ill-disguised capitalist opportunist (Africa markets shape Clinton itinerary, March 22). Thousands of people die miserable deaths every year from extreme poverty in Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, according to Unicef, only about half the population has access to the most basic needs, such as clean water.

Promoting the adoption of Western capitalism and "trade not aid" as a solution to poverty is more likely to perpetuate historical exploitation and generation of profits for the few (the few, as usual, being US business). Self-sufficiency is the key to Africa's future, but it is support for education and initiatives such as microcredit financing that will enable Africans to turn their own lives around and raise their standard of living without being taken advantage of.

Karen Hodgson,
Victoria, BC, Canada

LOOKING at the photo of President Clinton behind bars alongside President Mandela (April 5), do you think Mr Clinton was acquiring a few tips in case his own home-grown problems go pear-shaped?

Stephen Brooks,
London

Briefly

FOR how much longer can the rest of the world stand by while year after year many thousands of people are murdered in the United States as a result of the lax gun laws and the culture of violence that exists in that country (Field to roam by the gun lobby, April 5)?

It is becoming accepted that the rest of the world has a right to interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation when massacres are taking place. Is it not time for a delegation from the European Union to visit the US for discussions at government level on how to tackle the problem? Perhaps the matter should be raised in the United Nations General Assembly and a resolution passed calling on Washington to take action to stamp out this crime against humanity.

Terry Jones,
Thurso, Caithness

BILL CLINTON asks if there are common elements between Jonesboro and other US school shootings. Yes, Mr President. Guns. Simon Boyd, Cambridge

IN VIEW of the fact that it has become almost customary in recent times for world leaders to apologise for past wrongs, when can we expect to hear an apology from someone for dispossessing the Palestinians? B Black, Auckland, New Zealand

JOHN RYLE'S piece (March 29) calls to mind a statement by Václav Havel when he was guest of honour at the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York, just a few weeks after he became president of Czechoslovakia in January 1990.

Mr Havel, a playwright by profession, had spent some of his most creative years in prison. According to Lewis Lapham of Harper's Magazine, Mr Havel did not give a speech. He explained that because he hadn't spent the afternoon in prison, he hadn't had time to compose his thoughts. Philip Shano, Guelph, Ontario, Canada

UNTIL we manage to solve the problem of non-gender specific singular personal pronouns, may I suggest to your leader writer (March 22) the policy of consciously using plural subjects — people, human beings, instead of a person or one — in sentences that do not refer to identifiable individuals. The resulting construction not only avoids sexism, it strikes a blow, however modest, against the rampant individualism of our culture. J E Ties, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

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GUARDIAN WEEKLY
April 12 1998

Mandela's army chief forced out

David Beresford
in Johannesburg

THE head of the South African National Defence Force, General Georg Meiring, was forced into early retirement this week after a botched attempt by military intelligence to frame public figures on treason charges.

Gen Meiring said he was retiring in an attempt to "restore trust" in the military. Several other senior officers were expected to be cashiered with him.

The military had tried to implicate a number of well-known figures in a plot to stage a coup, among them Winnie Mandela; the deputy minister of defence, Ronnie Kasrils; the former leader of the Transkei, General Bantu Holomisa; and the diplomat Robert McBride.

Gen Meiring's likely successor as military commander, Lieutenant General Siphwe Nysada, had been identified as the leader of the bogus conspiracy.

"I have, after due consideration of all the facts... decided that it would be in the best interests of the Sandf if I would ask the president to suspend my contract and allow me to retire on early pension without prejudice," Gen Meiring said.

He confirmed that his decision stemmed from an intelligence report that had falsely claimed there was a plot to overthrow President Nelson Mandela's government, saying: "My position of trust has been unsettled by the report, which leaves me no choice but to come to this decision." He said he would retire with effect from the end of May — nearly a year early.

A statement from the presidency said that Gen Meiring's retirement had been accepted "with regret", and that the cabinet would decide on his successor. President Mandela was quoted as saying the decision was "appropriate" and "honourable".

The announcement brings to an end one of the more bizarre episodes in South Africa's post-apartheid history. It began last month with the arrest in Mozambique of Mr McBride, the head of the Southeast Asia desk in the department of foreign affairs, on gun-running charges. His detention led to a frenzy of press speculation, with claims that he was smuggling arms for the IRA, for rebels in East Timor or for a coup attempt in South Africa.

The speculation was fed by elements of military intelligence,

who leaked details from an intelligence report claiming that Mr McBride had been under surveillance on suspicion of treason.

Mr Mandela moved to defuse what was developing into a power struggle within the defence establishment by appointing a judicial tribunal under the chief justice, Ismail Mahomed, to investigate the veracity of the intelligence report and the circumstances in which it had been brought to his attention.

The judges found the report was "without substance", that it was based on allegations from a single, unreliable source — a former security force spy arrested with Mr McBride in Mozambique — and that normal safeguards regarding its veracity had been circumvented when it had been presented to the president.

EU and UN plan joint aid strategy

Martin Walker in Brussels

THE bulk of the world's budget for development aid, and 95 per cent of the aid for Africa, is to be organised by a single body that will promote private enterprise, human rights and democracy.

The strategy emerged after the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union on Monday agreed to establish a joint steering group for their \$11 billion aid programmes.

This follows a similar agreement between the EU and the World Bank, and leaves only the shrinking United States and Japanese aid budgets as major donors outside the joint strategy.

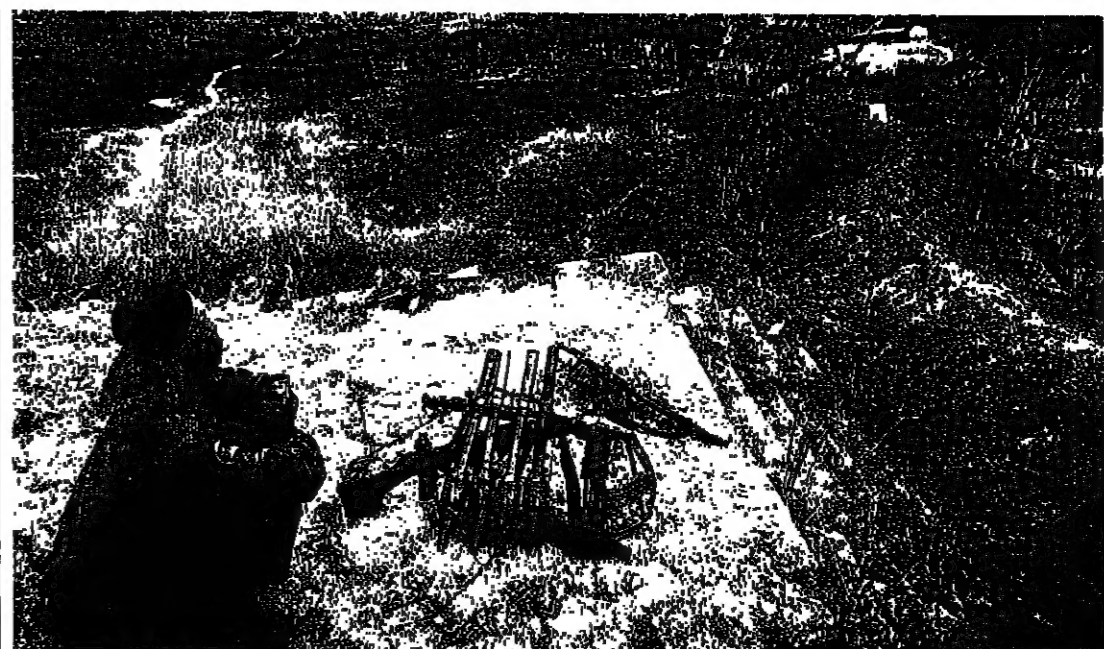
With an aid budget of \$8.3 billion, the EU is by far the world's most generous donor. The UNDP has a smaller budget of \$2.7 billion. But the political effect of the UN's backing for the strategy is important because the UN has traditionally given developing countries a greater say in its programmes.

There is a much stronger consensus about the main priorities and pre-conditions for development than there ever has been," the UNDP's chief administrator, James Speil, said. "We all agree on the right policies, on the need for developing countries to access the benefits of an increasingly globalised market place, and we all know that you can't get development by economic growth alone. And I stress that this consensus is not simply among the donor community. It has also been forged with great care and some difficulty to include the developing countries."

The idea of co-ordinating development budgets is not new, but attempts to achieve it have proved disappointing, as many donor countries see their aid programmes as ways to increase their national exports or political influence.

The EU and UN said other big aid donors, such as the US, were welcome to join.

The EU promised to help Asia overcome its financial crisis at the second Asia-Europe conference in London. Twenty-five leaders from the two continents promised to work together to support economic reforms in Asia and resist protectionist pressures.



A Khmer Rouge defector armed with rocket-propelled grenades keeps watch at the site of a helicopter crash near the remote base of Perah Vihear, Cambodia. Khmer Rouge remnants retook the town of Anlong Veng last week, but the movement's demise seems certain. *Le Monde*, page 13. PHOTO: OUN NEAKRY

Ukraine voters yearn for Soviet days

James Meek in Moscow

THE Ukrainian president, Leonid Kuchma, insisted last week that he would continue market reforms despite a strong vote for Communists and their socialist allies in parliamentary elections which left them just short of an absolute majority.

One pro-government newspaper in Kiev headlined its report "Red Dawn" after 38 million voters, oppressed by poverty, corruption and a wages crisis in which workers are owed \$3 billion in back-pay, gave the four leftwing parties an overall 42 per cent of the vote.

The left's share, 26 per cent, went to the Communists, who oppose privatisation, the sale of land and Ukraine's increasingly close relationship with the West. They believe in a planned economy, regret the break-up of the Soviet Union, and want closer ties with their fellow ex-Soviet East Slavs in neighbouring Russia and Belarus.

Despite the left's triumph, effectively a shout of anger from the electorate at the failure of seven years of economic decline and half-hearted reform under Mr Kuchma and his predecessor, Leonid Kravchuk, the president said there would be no return to Soviet economic methods.

Millions of Ukrainians died as a result of the Russian civil war, forced collectivisation and state-inspired famine. Yet the left's electorate sees in the Communists not the Bolshevik ideologues of Lenin's time or Stalin's butchers but the meagre certainties of the three decades when the Soviet Union was ruled by Ukrainians: Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev.

Mr Kuchma, a former missile factory boss from Brezhnev's home town of Dnepropetrovsk, has won democratic credentials and delayed reform since election in 1994 by trying to work with parliament rather than without it, as other post-Soviet leaders, in Russia and Central Asia, have done.

From the perspective of the early 1990s, when the country was gripped by hyperinflation and its very survival seemed in doubt, today's stable currency and calm, generally free democratic processes are striking achievements. But liberals, pro-marketisers and foreign investors have become as disenchanted as Ukraine's Communists, pensioners and unpaid workers with Mr Kuchma's hesitancy over reform.

Shortly before the election, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank suspended huge loan programmes, accusing Mr Kuchma's government of bad faith.

His success was welcomed by the Russian Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, who dreams of reunifying the East Slavs as a prelude to recreating the Soviet Union. "In Russia, people are increasingly disappointed in democratic parties and movements. The same process is under way in Ukraine," he said.

The election was a disaster for Ukrainian nationalists and centrists, who went to the polls fragmented into dozens of parties. The nationalist standard bearer, Rukh, scraped into second place, with less than 9 per cent of the vote and was beaten by Communists in some of its old Kiev strongholds.

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The Week

PRESIDENT CLINTON urged the government of Japan to take bold action to overcome civil service resistance to the economic reforms that could drag the country out of financial crisis. Comment, page 12
Washington Post, page 16

SIXTY-THREE miners were killed and 45 injured in a methane gas explosion and fire at the Skachinskoh mine in Donetsk, Ukraine.

THE United States envoy Richard Holbrooke left Cyprus after separate talks with Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders failed to achieve a breakthrough in his attempt to reunify the island.

PAULA JONES'S sexual harassment lawsuit against President Clinton was thrown out by an Arkansas judge after she ruled that the evidence submitted was insufficient for a claim of criminal sexual assault. *Washington Daily*, page 6

ROBERT KOCHARYAN, an uncompromising Armenian nationalist, won the second round of the country's presidential elections, dealing a blow to the prospects of a peaceful resolution to the 10-year conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

DENMARK'S supreme court threw out a challenge to the legality of the European Union's Maastricht treaty. Eurosceptics had argued that the treaty was a threat to national sovereignty.

HEAVY rain has extinguished more than 95 per cent of the fires that have devastated vast areas of savannah and jungle in Brazil's northern Amazon.

CHINA has agreed to allow European Union envoys to spend a week in Tibet looking at the human rights situation.

GOCHA ESEBUEA, who kidnapped several UN soldiers and was also suspected of an attack on the Georgian president, Eduard Shevardnadze, was killed in a shoot-out with government forces.

THE United States government announced a ban on the import of more than 50 types of semi-automatic assault weapons, such as the AK-47 and the Uz.

ANDREI KLIMENTIEV, a twice-convicted businessman who was last week elected mayor of Russia's third city, Nizhny Novgorod, has been arrested for embezzlement. The election was declared void. *La Mordé*, page 19

TAMMY WYNETTE, the singer from the Alabama cotton fields who became one of the great figures of country music, has died, aged 55.

John Co 136



Martin Kettle

When that happens, the House of Representatives will have to decide how to handle the issue. Last month Lott was one of the first senior Republicans to urge Starr to get a move on with his increasingly unpopular and problematic investi-

the Christian Coalition, Ralph Reed. He said that Judge Wright's decision demonstrated the pitfalls of Republican reliance on scandals to "weaken the administration and bolster Republicans". The problem was "you end up turning your party's political destiny into someone's hand other



Gingrich, who harbours dreams

For the political truth remains that Clinton stands to benefit from a bungled Congressional investigation. Even if Lott and Gingrich get it right and choose the least contentious or partisan approach to Starr's report, they will still be attacked as vindictive and unpatriotic by the White House. And if they fail to drive Clinton from office when they have the opportunity, they will be attacked as incompetent by their own headline supporters.

To apply national opinion polls to local contests in the United States is a mug's game, and the likelihood that the Republicans will hold on is still strong. But a real contest is now in prospect. The stakes are huge for Clinton. But they are almost as great for Lott and Gingrich, who must make political judgments now about the Starr report that will shape US politics for years to come.

Washington Post page 16

Martin Walker

Take 26 nations, each represented by a prime minister. Give each one five minutes to make opening remarks. (And each coun-

player such as Britain (nearly 60 million people) gets 10 votes and tiny Luxembourg (with fewer than 500,000) gets just two. It tried to simplify and to accelerate decision-

Is this good or bad? For a passionate Euro-federalist it is a great disappointment. It means that there will still be no clear governing body of and for Europe. For those Europeans in the tradition of De Gaulle and Margaret Thatcher, who want an economically prosperous confederation of nation states, the current

But the CAP, which still takes up almost half of the EU budget, is another of the European institutions that faces problems throughout

The new European Central Bank is the route through which federalism will come, and by which the arguments of ministers from 15, 20, or eventually 26, member states gathered together in the Council will become increasingly petty. Until that is, the big day when the Council finds itself at loggerheads with the central bankers.

New Zealand balks at moral crusade


Stories such as these, she said, just destroy many people's confi-

Moral crusaders, however, are rarely stopped by quibbles about mere facts.



Shipley: has upset secular nation

The controversial Code of Responsibility was first mooted by Winston Peters, the senior finance minister and a populist who leads the profoundly unpopular NZF. Mr Peters aimed the code initially at welfare beneficiaries who, he says, were abusing the system and not



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BRISTOL & WEST
INTERNATIONAL

[illegible]

Teachers vote to act against red tape

Vivek Chaudhary

BRTAIN'S two biggest teaching unions have voted for industrial action over the amount of paperwork that teachers are expected to complete. In a National Union of Teachers (NUT) ballot, 93 per cent of members who voted supported industrial action. The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers also voted in favour of action. It could put the profession on a collision course with the Government.

The annual conference of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) this week was also expected to hear calls for a ballot on excessive paperwork. The ATL is issuing its members with a questionnaire about bureaucracy and has pledged to back industrial action if members feel there is too much.

Doug McAvoy, the NUT general secretary, said the 28 per cent turnout for his union's ballot was low, but that the burden of paperwork could only be reduced by giving schools more resources. Mr McAvoy has already called on the Government to issue directives to local education authorities and head teachers on how to cut the workload. These are expected to be issued by September.

The ATL survey asked 13 questions about the effects of red tape on work and health. Peter Smith, gen-

eral secretary of the ATL, said: "It's not just the Government which is responsible for excessive teacher workloads. The problem is, so much bureaucracy is created by local authorities and schools themselves. If school managers fail to curb [it], ATL will sanction a ballot on industrial action as a last resort."

The Government has already responded to teachers' concerns by establishing a working group on red tape in schools. But teachers' leaders complained that it failed to address the problem because its remit did not extend to schools' statutory duties. Teachers have claimed that legislation due to be passed by Parliament will lead to more paperwork, a conference of headteachers was told last week.

Meanwhile Labour MP Margaret Hodge claimed that linking teachers' pay to their pupils' academic improvement would motivate and help teachers working in schools that finish in a low league table position.

Ms Hodge also called for a raising of the entry requirements for teacher training, claiming that many colleges were happy to admit trainees with poor A level grades.

The NUT said: "A child's development depends on the work of many teachers, not solely on the efforts of one. Performance-related pay is divisive and Ms Hodge should realise the reality of teamwork in schools."



'Free Zoorah Shah' demonstrators at the High Court at the start of her appeal last week. PHOTO: JAMES HORN

Abuse 'drove' Asian woman to kill

THE conviction of an Asian woman for murdering a man who had been violent to her was unsafe and should be overturned. The Court of Appeal was told last week, writes Duncan Campbell.

Zoorah Shah, from Bradford, is appealing against her conviction for the murder by arsenic poisoning of Mohamed Azam, aged 47. She was jailed for life in 1993 at Leeds crown court with a recommendation that she serve at least 20 years.

Her counsel, Edward Fitzgerald QC, told Lord Justice Kennedy that Shah had been suffering from diminished responsibility at her trial. She had not told the full story of her treatment at the hands of Azam, a convicted drug dealer, because she did not want to bring shame on her family. She had also been suffering from a depressive illness.

Earlier, Maurice Lipsedge, consultant at Guy's Hospital and a specialist in transcultural psychiatry,

explained why a woman from Shah's strict Muslim background might have felt unable to tell the truth. She had said that Azam had forced her to have sex with him in exchange for her house, and that she had had to have sex with other men.

Crown counsel Robert Smith QC said that at her trial Shah had lied and had given untrue evidence for Azam at his trial on drug offences.

Judgment will be given later this month.

Paedophiles may be jailed indefinitely

Luke Harding

THE Government said this week it was considering new laws to lock up Britain's most dangerous paedophiles indefinitely, following the furore over the release from jail of child killer Sidney Cooke.

The Home Office may give courts powers to jail child sex attackers until they die. Ministers said that the Crime and Disorder Bill, which was expected to be introduced to the House of Commons this week, would also give police the power to stop paedophiles going near places frequented by children.

Cooke, the most notorious of 160 convicted paedophiles scheduled for release over the next two years, begins a new life in a regional secure unit this week, after the authorities expressed concern about his future safety.

The Home Secretary, Jack Straw,

said: "At the moment, paedophiles can be imprisoned indefinitely only if they have committed the most appalling of offences. A new sentence would allow dangerous paedophiles to be detained indefinitely after their first offence, possibly before they inflict terrible harm."

Cooke, who has served nine years of a 16-year sentence for manslaughter, was expected to be released this week. He has agreed to be electronically tagged so police can follow his movements but, because he was sentenced before the introduction in 1992 of new curbs on released sex offenders, there are no legal powers to detain him should he choose to leave.

"He could walk out of the regional secure unit at any time," a Home Office source said. "But he is a very frightened man. He realises the public is out for him and he could face an attack."

Cooke led an east London-based paedophile ring that hired rent boys or snatched children off the street in the 1980s. Cooke was convicted of the murder of a runaway, Jason Swift, aged 14, and was also named in court as the killer of Mark Tildesley, aged seven, who was abducted from a fairground in Wokingham, Berkshire, in 1984.

Gill Mackenzie, the Chief Probation Officer for Gloucestershire, said the dilemma of what to do with infantile paedophiles "has been severely aggravated by the hysteria that is created."

"The hint and sometimes the reality of vigilantism actually increases rather than reduces the risk to the community. If we know where people are... then that will reduce the risk to the community. If they are driven underground and hounded from pillar to post then that has to increase the risk."

Aitken police file reviewed

David Pallister

SCOTLAND Yard has sent a report to the Crown Prosecution Service about allegations against the former Tory cabinet minister Jonathan Aitken of perjury and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice during his failed libel trial last year.

The police file will now be reviewed by a CPS lawyer before a decision on a prosecution is reached. Perjury carries a maximum sentence of seven years.

Included in the file is an assessment of the roles played by Mr Aitken's daughter Victoria, aged 17, and his former Saudi business associate, Said Ayas, in supporting his story at the trial, which collapsed after two weeks. They signed witness statements but never gave evidence. All three were arrested and interviewed last month.

Mr Aitken had sued the Guardian and Granada's World in Action for allegations that he tried to procure women for his Arab friends; that he was dependent on the Saudi royal family; that he acted improperly as a minister for defence procurement; and that his bill for a weekend at the Paris Ritz in 1993 was paid for by Saudi friends.

After the stories appeared in April 1995 Mr Aitken, the then Chief Secretary to the Treasury, vowed to fight what he called "wicked lies". His case finally collapsed in the High Court last June.

Tories 'hid' health costs

Michael White

MORE than £100 million in management costs were hidden within the National Health Service budget because of "perverse incentives" imposed on health managers by Tory ministers under their controversial internal market reforms, a Department of Health investigation has found.

In order to encourage the contracting out of services such as cleaning and laundry to private firms, ministers in the Thatcher/Major era ruled that the management costs of running such services should not be recorded as management costs.

That made hospitals which contracted out services look more efficient, according to a study by the NHS executive on behalf of the Health Secretary, Frank Dobson.

If the true costs of management were equalised — as they will be under new rules — the bill rises by almost £1.5 million at the Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital Trust in London, and by £1.2 million in the North Staffordshire Trust.

The health minister, Alan Milburn, said: "Everyone knows the Tories fiddled the unemployment figures. It is now clear the NHS bureaucracy figures were fiddled as well."

Officials evaluating existing definitions found that hospitals had been given "perverse incentives". For example, any trust that took the lead in seeking to co-operate with other trusts in consortiums to share services had its management costs recorded against its budget.

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In Brief

FROM 2000 the A level examination system will be shaken up to allow sixth form pupils to study a wider range of subjects, combining both academic and vocational qualifications.

CALLS for a review of compensation payments to the victims of crime were made following the disclosure that Joie Russell, aged 11, who survived an attack in which her mother and sister died, had been awarded £18,500 for her loss.

CAMPAIGNERS at Faslane peace camp, the country's oldest anti-nuclear site, won a legal battle against eviction.

JASON HUMBLE, the rally driver who killed a young couple by ramming their car across a dual carriageway, was sentenced to 12 years in jail in one of Britain's first road rage manslaughter convictions.

BRTAIN'S air traffic control system could face a rise in the number of near misses because of problems with the equipping of a new £350 million computer centre near Southampton that should have opened last December. Bumpy ride, page 24

FOUR children sexually abused by a teenager fostered by their parents won a landmark victory giving them the right to sue the council for negligence in placing him in their home.

ALAN BLYTHE, who supplied his wife with cannabis to ease her pain from multiple sclerosis, was cleared on three out of four drug-related charges.

SUICIDE attempts by girls in their teens and early 20s are at epidemic levels, according to the Samaritans who found that nearly on in five has tried to kill herself before the age of 25.

PETER Boddington, the 60-day smoker who mounted a two-year legal crusade for the right to light up on trains, has his case stubbed out in the Lords.

THE stepfather of nine-year-old Zoe Evans has been jailed for life for her murder last year.

ANTHONY-NOEL Kelly was sentenced to nine months in jail for using the dissected human remains of up to 40 bodies as moulds in sculptures.

ANNA FERRETTI, James Hewitt's former fiancée, was arrested after stealing his letters from Diana, Princess of Wales, and attempting to sell them to a tabloid newspaper.

SIR DEREK Barton, British Nobel Laureate in chemistry, has died in Texas aged 79.

Mitchell presents Ulster plan

John Mullin

GEORGE Mitchell, the Northern Ireland talks chairman, on Tuesday finally presented to the participating parties his best guess of where a political settlement lies as serious differences among the parties threatened Thursday's deadline for a deal.

Mr Mitchell, who spoke by telephone throughout the evening with Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern, the Irish prime minister, was unable to present the draft agreement that he had planned. Too much disagreement remained, and his long-awaited document instead sets out common areas, options and recommendations.

The British and Irish governments were unable to agree on the

powers and functions of cross-border bodies. They eventually decided to lodge separate papers with Mr Mitchell before he completed his own document.

Mr Mitchell, in upbeat form, said: "Seeing the issues in a comprehensive document like this strengthens our belief more than ever that a fair and balanced agreement is possible. We are aware that there remain many disagreements, and we anticipate intensive discussions."

He hoped that there would be no leaks. "Lives and deaths are at stake here. It would be incredible and disturbing if anyone sought to do that for short-term advantage."

The Ulster Unionists and the nationalist SDLP were embroiled throughout Monday in argument

over the proposed Northern Ireland assembly. They met at least three times in an effort to resolve their differences, but there was no sign of a breakthrough.

Mr Mitchell was desperate to put forward a document by Monday night, aware that time was slipping away. He had planned to pass it to the parties last week, and was angry when Mr Blair and Mr Ahern asked him to wait pending their consultations with the Ulster Unionists and Sinn Féin. Although increasingly frustrated, Mr Mitchell said that he believed it better that the paper was late and right than on time and wrong.

It had long been assumed that the parties would be able to agree on the operation of an assembly, but

Mark Durkan, one of the SDLP's negotiators, denied that. Three strands are being negotiated simultaneously, avoiding the problems inherent in the sequential deals that led to the demise of the ill-fated Sunningdale agreement 25 years ago.

The SDLP wants a power-sharing executive above the assembly. It is also seeking a sufficiency of consensus approach, effectively giving each community in Northern Ireland a veto over all decisions.

Unionists are demanding a committee-style system to run Northern Ireland's six departments. That would mean a weaker assembly than that suggested by the SDLP.

Pleas that the parties should go into purdah once Mr Mitchell produced his document came from Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and David Andrews, the Irish foreign affairs minister. They are likely to go unheeded.

Blair acts to save mines

Seumas Milne

TONY BLAIR is preparing to end two decades of government hostility towards the mining industry and lift the threat to thousands of coalfield jobs by acting to guarantee coal a slice of Britain's energy market, ministerial sources say.

The reversal of what the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, last year described as a Tory government vendetta against miners has been agreed in principle by ministers in the face of resistance from civil servants and privatised electricity generators.

In a move that marks the limits of New Labour's anti-interventionism, the Government is set to carve out for coal a share of between a quar-

ter and a third of the lop-sided power market — if necessary by requiring generators to maintain a minimum level of coal burning.

The jobs of 10,000 miners, 23 deep-mine collieries and an industry which accounted for 80 per cent of electricity output until 1990 are at stake in a crisis that must be resolved in the next two months.

"We have to be absolutely convinced of the strategic, economic and energy case," a minister said. "But it would be simply irrational to let the coal industry go under."

Although the final decisions on how to underpin coal's share of the market will be taken next month — before the current power contracts with the main coal producer, RJB Mining, run out in June — the Cabinet committee in charge of the coal crisis has now settled the central question.

Ministers were faced with three options — allow the "dash for gas" to reduce coal to a cottage industry, manage coal's continued decline or intervene to guarantee a minimum market share.

"The government machine favoured the first and second options," one minister involved in the discussions said. "But ministers are backing the third."

The threat to coal stems from the renegotiation of supply contracts to the electricity generators, which have cut by some 12 million tonnes to around 17 million tonnes a year their orders for domestic coal.



Court rejects housing plans

Lucy Ward

THE Government faced fresh embarrassment over greenfield development this week after the High Court ruled that the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, had breached his department's guidelines when he agreed a plan for 113 new homes in a south coast resort.

The court ruled that Mr Prescott should not have cleared plans for a housing development on greenfield land at Peasehaven, East Sussex, which prompted widespread local protest.

Meanwhile the future of another of the country's most controversial planned developments was also cast into doubt as Labour-run Hertfordshire county council voted to delay plans for 10,000 houses to the west of Stevenage. The scheme, which would involve the biggest incursion

into green belt land since the second world war and has prompted fierce protests from residents, will now be halted after councillors agreed to ask Mr Prescott to review the housing target for the county.

Friends of the Earth welcomed the double setback for development. The charity's housing campaigner, Simon Festing, said Mr Prescott "cannot ride roughshod over the opinions of local people by allowing so much greenfield development".

In the Peasehaven case, Mr Justice Harrison said Mr Prescott, Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, had erred in law when he gave the scheme his blessing last November.

The judge said the minister had failed properly to consider the strategy of Lewes district council of focusing local development away from the over-crowded coastal strip.

UN probes Belfast death

HUMAN rights organisations welcomed the contents of a United Nations report published last week which calls for a judicial inquiry into alleged security force collusion in the murder in 1989 of a Belfast criminal lawyer, Pat Finucane, writes John Mullin.

The report, drawn up by a Malaysian jurist, Param Cumaraswamy, the UN Human Rights Commission special rapporteur, fuels renewed suspicions of army and police collaboration in assassination of suspected IRA terrorists. The RUC refused to comment.

Mr Cumaraswamy also calls for an independent investigation into threats made to lawyers. He alleges that the RUC engages in "activities

which constitute intimidation, hindrance and harassment" of solicitors representing terrorist suspects.

His inquiry is the first time the UN has investigated allegations of human rights abuses in the Northern Ireland criminal system.

Mr Cumaraswamy wants the right to silence to be immediately reinstated, and an end to trials without jury, where a judge delivers both verdict and sentence.

Five rights organisations — Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Commission of Jurists, the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and the International Federation of Human Rights — back the findings.

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Banks enters race for mayor

John Duncan and Lucy Patton

TONY BANKS has confirmed he is ready to go up against Ken Livingstone to stand as Labour's candidate for London mayor, while Chris Smith emerged as the Cabinet's favourite candidate if Londoners vote for a mayor in next month's referendum.

Mr Banks, MP for Newham North West and sports minister, joins Mr Livingstone as the only two declared candidates for the job. Mr Banks and Mr Livingstone were the capital's favourite politicians during their time together at the Greater London Council (GLC) in the 1970s and

1980s. Mr Smith, the Culture Secretary, was reported as having the backing of senior Cabinet members.

There were reports that if Mr Smith stood with the backing of Downing Street, the transport minister, Glenda Jackson would be prepared to stand aside to prevent the vote being split. Ms Jackson was an early front-runner and her strategists are preparing to launch her campaign after the referendum. Private polls of Labour activists, however, are said to show Mr Livingstone well ahead of Ms Jackson.

Mr Banks, who joined the GLC in 1970 and was chairman in the year of its demise, was best loved for his

attempt to ban the County Hall champagne bar for being elitist and for inviting Miss Whiplash to hold a book launch at the same venue.

Although Mr Livingstone is considered too leftwing for current Labour tastes, the party desperately needs a populist candidate with London credibility to take on a possible high-profile campaign by Jeffrey Archer. "I'm definitely going to go for it," said Mr Banks. "After I've seen the terms and conditions of course. I'm going to go for it, because it's a great job."

Mr Banks and Mr Livingstone are friends from the GLC days though the two have different lives outside Parliament — news for Mr Livingstone, Chelsea Football Club for Mr Banks.

The 1st of 1998

Land of the rising sums

IT IS NOT often that governments urge their citizens to go out on a binge and spend, spend, spend. But that is exactly what is happening in Japan as the country tries to stave off what could be a very serious recession with ominous implications for Asia and the rest of the world. Having failed to stimulate the economy so far with four successive reflationary packages (and a fifth in the pipeline), the government has torn up the economic textbooks and launched an advertising campaign instead. It has taken space in 22 magazines and on 22,000 poster sites imploring people to go out and spend.

This approach addresses the economy's most pressing short-term problem — lack of consumer demand — but it won't necessarily work. The Japanese are becoming so afraid of their financial futures and so mistrustful of government that they prefer simply to save rather than spend. One of the few booming markets in Japan is for home safes, where people can keep their cash secure from prying governments and dodgy banks. The Japanese now save more than 30 per cent of their disposable income, the highest rate for more than 25 years.

The Japanese economy is not yet a basket case but could easily become one if fear becomes endemic. Its manufacturing sector is still a formidable wealth-creating machine (albeit hit by the collapse of markets at home and elsewhere in East Asia). It has low inflation and a huge balance of payments surplus. But there is a paralysis of decision-making at the heart of government, a financial sector dripping with bad debts and a stock market that has just taken a bath. Last week the first of the "Big Bang" deregulation reforms took effect. Over time these could help reform by allowing weaker banks to go to the wall, leaving the field open for stronger Japanese firms and ambitious overseas ones. But in the short-term liberalisation of foreign exchange regulations is likely to encourage fearful investors to desert domestic savings (offering minute interest rates) in favour of attractive foreign stocks. This will be offset if Japanese organisations feeling the squeeze repatriate some of the vast assets they have accumulated abroad, but there's bound to be a net outflow of cash which will depress the already undervalued yen — thereby compounding Asia's woes.

The short-term problem was unquestionably caused by the government's ill-advised decision to raise value added tax a year ago. Consumers spent heavily in the months leading up to the increase, and then abruptly stopped. The obvious answer is to reverse that decision. But even so, there is no guarantee that recipients won't just add the surplus to their savings. The five packages announced by the government are a mixture of measures to stabilise the banking system, modest tax cuts and public spending increases. The trouble is that support is being given to bad banks as well as good ones, while the spending has become embroiled in the pork-barrel politics of the ruling Liberal Democratic party as it woos voters in the run-up to the general election.

Japan has a problem Britain would love to have: excess savings. But that doesn't make a solution any easier. Consumers should spend more and corporations ought to invest more. But if they don't, government will have to spend it for them — on real projects, not pre-electoral confections. In case that doesn't work, the rest of the world had better be on standby. The world's second biggest economy is too vital to be left to go belly-up.

New perils in Israel

WHETHER killed the Second Engineer matters much less than the likely consequences. These could be as severe as those that have almost destroyed the Middle East peace process since Israeli agents killed the No 1 of the Hamas terrorist organisation two years ago. There is a difference between the killings. Last week the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was quick to deny that Israeli intelligence had anything to do with the death of Muhi al-Din Sharif, shot dead on the West Bank late last month. He may even be telling the truth. In January 1996 Israeli sources were only too happy to nudge and wink after "the Engineer"

Yahya Ayyash was blown up in Gaza, in a killing that led to a wave of retaliatory suicide attacks — and to the electoral victory of the Likud party and Mr Netanyahu himself. But in the situation today, where a single spark may start a fire, a denial has little relevance.

Even without this killing, the latest United States initiative is already in a desperate state of dither. The administration cannot decide whether to continue playing along with Mr Netanyahu's strategy of minimal concessions that can be claimed to keep the peace process "alive". The Israeli acceptance, 20 years late, of United Nations Resolution 425 on withdrawal from Lebanon — but only subject to "security arrangements" — is a more transparent diversion. Or should Bill Clinton go public with a plan that would shift the burden of decision back onto the Israelis? Such a plan — the "13 per cent pullback" of Israeli forces from the West Bank — does not appear to have been formally delivered by the US envoy, Dennis Ross. Nor does Mr Netanyahu's supposed counter-offer (which he, too, has formally denied) of 11 per cent. Yasser Arafat seems inclined to accept the US proposal though it falls far short of Palestinian demands.

This is all shadow boxing. The issue is rather which side is more willing to risk a total breakdown of the peace process. Mr Arafat from his weaker position continues to make the greater concessions; Mr Netanyahu pleads weakness in the shape of domestic hawks, but plays from what he perceives as strength.

The suggestion that the Palestinian Authority might have arranged the death of Hamas's No 2 to demonstrate its commitment to Israeli "security" defies commonsense. No one knows better than Mr Arafat that in a real explosion his power base would be the first victim. For any Israeli leader to countenance an action that could trigger a return to bombings also seems an act of huge folly. Yet the deed can only have been committed with the intent of wrecking what remains of the peace process.

The signal that this sends should be felt everywhere, particularly in Washington. Mr Clinton is said to be unconvinced that an open clash with Mr Netanyahu is good tactics — but since when did a compromise plan amount to confrontation? Next month's visit to Israel by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, should become part of a concerted effort. If quiet diplomacy will not break the deadlock, a louder version must be tried.

Big bang and a whimper

BY BECOMING the first nuclear weapons states to carry out ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Britain and France have given the process a small nudge that may encourage the other three overt nuclear powers. A united front of all five is the minimum requirement for moving forward. Alas, the minimum is not enough.

One reason is that the CTBT needs 44 named states to ratify. These include India and Pakistan, who have no intention of signing. But there is also widespread scepticism that the treaty merely legitimises the dominance of the nuclear five. As Robert Bell, arms control director at the United States National Security Council put it, "the point of the treaty is to ban the bang, not to ban the bomb". Only last week the Los Alamos National Laboratory was said to be producing plutonium triggers in order to "prepare a reserve supply if additional weapons are built in the future".

It is true that the very existence of the treaty may make it harder for a would-be nuclear power to develop weapons. The International Monitoring System now being set up will make it virtually impossible to avoid detection. It is true too that failure to conclude the treaty would have set back the cause of nuclear restraint significantly. It may also be argued that the South Asian problem has its own dynamic that was never going to respond to appeals for self-denial. Yet in the end the blatant character of the nuclear monopoly must reduce the credibility of the treaty and encourage "rogue" nuclear states to ignore it.

Cynicism will only be dispelled by visibly serious efforts to scale down arsenals to a real minimum — in the spirit of the pledge given by the five when negotiating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, said this week that Britain's CTBT ratification signalled a commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world. With the non-nuclear option excluded even from the current defence review, who is going to believe him?

No more rich ethnicity please, we're British

Jeremy Hardy

THE British Home Secretary, Jack Straw, was reassuring us last week that Labour was not soft on asylum claims. He is so adamant that I feel it would be just and suitable nemesis to be to transpire that his son has been selling forged travel documents in Sierra Leone.

Scary immigration stories have been coming thick and fast since a small number of Romanians arrived in Dover last year. To demonstrate what a hold this mythology has on impressionable minds, I shall quote a barrister who was defending a wealthy Swiss banker caught shoplifting in Harrods last December. Richard St Clair-Gainer told Horseferry Road magistrates: "This is not some Gypsy from some part of Czechoslovakia, who has come here to go into our stores and steal with a gang."

But in the past couple of weeks the British have been told that they are besieged mainly by Turks, Africans, Russians and ethnic Albanians — and all because of the bloody Belgians. It seems that they are sending huddled masses to Britain on the Eurostar. I think what galled the rightwing papers most was the fact of refugees travelling on a comfortable train. To qualify as a genuine asylum-seeker, one is expected to arrive clinging to a leaky raft, with only a tiny radio tuned to the BBC World Service.

Clearly, it is appalling that some other European countries are dumping refugees in Britain, but only because it means that they are expelling refugees. The Belgians are being attacked for the wrong reason. The real victims are the people dumped. I am at a loss to understand how anyone can feel hostile towards people who are trying to start a new life. They are called "spongers" and "chancers", who are milking the benefit system. But nowhere do we see the suggestion that we need to get refugees off benefit and into work. Indeed, anyone caught working without a permit is immediately arrested and deported.

And nowhere has any xenophobe pointed out that if the European Union were to expand to include Russia, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, then anyone from those places would be entitled to come to Britain to live and work. If the Czech Republic and Slovakia were admitted, I guess all their Gypsies could come, as I have received letters from Czech and Slovak patriots insisting that their Romanians are definitely not stateless.

This is not an anti-EU tirade; it's merely an observation. I don't mind who lives where and I'm not quaking in my boots about the 15 European countries who might be considering dumping their entire populations on Britain.

Living in fear of what might happen drives people mad. In the sixties we were all terrified of the birth rate and in the eighties we were warned that there were not enough babies being born to support the growing army of old people. The old, it seems, are multiplying at an alarming rate, as bits fall off them and start new ones, like starfish. I'm sure it is the case that, if everyone succeeded at the same

time, the Earth would be thrown off its axis, but I think it's best to get on with life none the less.

I do get distracted wondering how many racist South Africans are entitled to flee democracy and make their homes in Britain, and I can say I'm overly fond of the Swiss, but if my street starts to hum with the pong of Boerwurst and foie gras, I'll just have to deal with it.

I dare say that some people who claim that they are fleeing persecution are fibbing, but even then you can't blame them, because it's extremely hard to migrate if you give any other reason. You're not allowed to flee poverty, for example. That's "economic" so it doesn't count. Britain has drawn a line and said, "We are proud of the richness of our ethnic diversity, and grateful for your contributions to sport, catering, young people's music and brightly-coloured fabric, but we don't want any more of you, thank you very much."

It's hard to know whether asylum claims are "genuine" because it's highly subjective. We keep reading the word "bogus" but all it means is that immigration officials, whose job it is to keep foreigners out of the country, have rejected an application. When I think of someone who

No one seems to consider that it's very traumatic to uproot yourself and try to start all over again

has fled racism, religious persecution or war, nervously speaking through an interpreter while a civil servant asks: "When you say you were beaten, were you cut or merely bruised?" it puts me in mind of the cross-examination of rape victims.

Last week the Law Lords upheld an appeal by the Home Secretary to the effect that, from now on, members of a persecuted group have to prove that they are more likely to be persecuted than other members of that group. In other words, the fact that not everybody in the world wants or is able to come to Britain is held against those who do.

No one seems to consider that it's a very traumatic thing to uproot yourself and leave a home, a family and friends and try to start all over again in another part of the world; and yet, when we think of the Jews who perished in the camps, every one of us with a heart wider than that they'd all got out in time.

Now it seems the Home Office plans to chuck asylum applicants out within 10 days of the rejection to make it very hard for people to appeal. It is because the decisional bureaucrats are rightly open to legal challenge that there are so many people in Britain of uncertain status. Even then, there aren't too many. The Sun newspaper says that there are enough asylum seekers to benefit Britain to fill Wembley stadium, which frankly isn't very frightening. The Coca-Cola Cup football final was held there recently, and I doubt whether any one was heard to say, "Blimey, there are enough people here to fill Wembley Stadium."

Le Monde



Ten years? Just for using a silly rubber stamp?

Was justice really served?

COMMENT
Pierre Georges

THE news came over the agency wires as "urgent" shortly after 9am on April 2. The jury at the six-month trial of Maurice Papon in Bordeaux had just sentenced the defendant to 10 years' imprisonment for complicity in crimes against humanity.

The jurors handed down their sentence according to their "innermost conviction", as the law requires. Papon was guilty. But only of complicity, and not of complicity in everything. He was deemed to have been an accomplice to the arrest and illegal confinement of four of the eight groups of Jews who, between 1942 and 1944, were sent by train from Bordeaux to the Drancy transit centre near Paris on their way to Nazi death camps. But he was not found to have been an accomplice to murder.

In other words he was a semi-accomplice, according to a semi-verdict. It is not customary to comment on court sentences, especially so soon after the event. But in this case the accused himself commented on the nature of the verdict before

it was handed down. On April 1, in his final statement to the court, Papon asked: "Is there any such thing as a 10, 15, 30 or 60 per cent crime against humanity?"

"This [kind of] crime cannot be divided up. It's all or nothing — either I'm guilty or I'm innocent."

Let us admit that from a purely logical point of view a crime against humanity cannot be cut up into sections, and that guilt or the length of a sentence cannot be calculated according to the percentage of responsibility.

In Papon's view, what does 10 years represent? Ten, 15, 30 or 60 per cent? It is either too much or, given the number of lives and families annihilated by the Nazis, not nearly enough. Papon was quite right to talk of "all or nothing". There could not be a verdict that saw him just as a modest, secondary, subordinate and unconscious accomplice to a crime against humanity — a "paper player", as someone described him.

Nor could there be a ruling that treated him as a collaborator in the Holocaust against his will, a senior French administration official forced to supply

victims to an all-powerful German Nazi machine, when he so zealously and efficiently drew up the lists of those to be deported.

They were not just "paper" lists. They were made of flesh and blood of men, women and children whose names went on the lists solely because they were Jewish, whose sole "crime" was to have been born Jewish.

In ruling that Papon had not been an accomplice to murder, the court accepted the argument that the man who drew up those lists was unaware of the appalling fate that awaited the helpless people who had been identified, registered, rounded up and dispatched in cattle trucks. The court did its duty; it followed its "innermost conviction" after a gruelling trial — the longest in postwar French legal history.

One may, I think, be forgiven for not sharing that conviction, in view of what Papon had told the court several months earlier on December 19 he admitted that he knew the trainloads of Jews were being sent to concentration camps, and described their fate as a departure towards "annihilation".

(April 3)

Cambodia braces for a rough ride to elections

Jean-Claude Pomonti
in Phnom Penh

BY greatly reducing the last pocket of Khmer Rouge resistance in the far north of the country, Cambodia's strongman, Hun Sen, has strengthened his hand in the fraught run-up to the elections in July.

The Khmer Rouge have suffered a serious setback at their sole remaining stronghold, near the town of Anlong Veng on the Thai border. Several of their units recently rebelled against the movement's ageing leadership. With the help of troops loyal to Hun Sen, these Khmer Rouge renegades are now fighting for control of the military base.

This development conveniently diverted attention from the return of King Norodom Sihanouk's son, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, to Phnom Penh last week. Last July, while he was on a trip abroad, Ranariddh was overthrown as Cambodia's senior prime minister by Hun Sen, the second prime minister.

On March 29 the Royal Army, which has been under Hun Sen's control since Ranariddh was deposed, escorted a group of Cambodian journalists to a point 15km from the Thai border where Khmer Rouge forces in the foothills of the Dangrek mountains were being subjected to artillery fire. The journalists were taken to within 2km of the homes of Ta Mok and Khieu Samphan, two Khmer Rouge leaders who have been on the run since some of their troops rebelled.

The Khmer Rouge forces admitted that up to 5,000 civilians had fled the combat zone, but claimed still to be in control. General Im Nguon, the Khmer Rouge military commander, said that forces led by Ta Mok, Pol Pot's presumed successor, "could probably mop up the sector within two or three days".

The Thai military, which has been monitoring the situation, said that the Anlong Veng sector had not yet fallen to the rebel Khmer Rouge, who had received support from the Royal Army.

The Thais added that, contrary to claims from Phnom Penh, the ruins

of Preah Vihear, 65km to the east, were still in the hands of Khmer Rouge forces loyal to Ta Mok and Khieu Samphan.

Even if the Khmer Rouge succeed in regaining control of the situation, the fighting and desertions are bound to sap the strength of a rebellion that is now being waged by only 2,000-3,000 isolated fighters.

The Royal Army chiefs have said that they will try to capture the Khmer Rouge old guard alive. That may include Pol Pot himself, who is believed to have followed Ta Mok and Khieu Samphan to their hideout. On March 29 Bangkok denied having received a request for political asylum from the two Khmer Rouge leaders.

Meanwhile, in a more strained atmosphere than usual, the political opposition in Cambodia swung back into action when Ranariddh returned to Phnom Penh as a result of a deal between King Sihanouk, now in the Chinese capital, Beijing, and the Hun Sen government.

When the prince flew from Bangkok he was met at the airport by 400 party activists and a posse of reporters. Hundreds of supporters lined the road from the airport. A few hours earlier, in the company of several hundred supporters, another leading opposition figure, Sam Rainsy, had commemorated the first anniversary of the grenade attack that killed at least 17 people and wounded about 150 a year ago. Rainsy, who is also standing at the July election, survived the attack, which was intended to kill him.

The return of Ranariddh, who was granted a royal pardon after being sentenced by a judiciary he does not recognise, is part of a Japanese-brokered plan that aims to get the prince's last remaining armed supporters re-integrated into the Royal Army so that a "free and honest" election can be held.

But Sihanouk, responding to a request from Hun Sen, made it clear that he would not pardon Ranariddh's military chiefs. So it looks as though the run-up to July's election is going to be a bumpy one.

(March 31)

Russia's mafia strides into the political limelight

Sophia Shinhub in Moscow

AT A TIME when observers are desperately trying to fathom the Byzantine intrigues going on in the Kremlin, two Russian provinces have been rocked by scandals that provide alarming evidence that the country's home-grown mafia is playing an increasing role in politics.

One of the cases involves General Alexander Lebed, who has emerged from semi-obscure to make a bid for the post of governor of the region of Krasnoyarsk in Central Siberia. The other scandal concerns Boris Nemtsov, President Boris Yeltsin's young protégé, and his birthplace, Nizhny Novgorod.

When Nemtsov was governor of the region he turned the city into a showcase for the "Russia that works". Today, however, Nizhny Novgorod has humiliated Nemtsov

and dealt a blow to his already flagging popularity.

On March 29 Nemtsov's deadly rival, Andrei Klimentiev, was elected mayor of the city. Klimentiev is a young businessman whose past has been described as "criminal". He had been a close friend of Nemtsov's before he was found guilty of fraud and of distributing pornographic films. Klimentiev was sentenced to eight years in a Soviet camp.

When he was released he became an even closer friend of Nemtsov, who had in the meantime become regional governor. Klimentiev obtained various favours from Nemtsov until the two men fell out in 1995.

Klimentiev was accused of having misappropriated part of a government loan intended for the local shipyard, and was given an 18-month jail sentence. He claimed that Nemtsov had slandered him and

denounced him to the secret services in order to mask his own corrupt practices. The young governor, who had by then become the second most important member of the government in Moscow, counterattacked by suing Klimentiev for libel.

This saga, familiar to everyone in Nizhny Novgorod, failed to deter 39 per cent of its inhabitants from voting for Klimentiev. In the election he managed to nose ahead of his two rivals, one of whom was supported by Nemtsov's successor as regional governor.

According to the local press Klimentiev conducted a "brilliant" election campaign, claiming to be "a rightwing patriot and an opponent of the regime". He got a helping hand from the maverick nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Klimentiev promised the moon to wage-earners

and pensioners who had not received a cent for months. His two lacustrine rivals, however, had seemed confident of victory.

News of Klimentiev's win flabbergasted the political community in Moscow. On March 31 a spokesman for Yeltsin said that the president was "deeply concerned" at the intrusion of criminals on to the political stage.

Russia's chief public prosecutor immediately announced that the election could be invalidated because of irregularities. Yet when Klimentiev appeared on the television programme The Hero Of The Day, he came across as self-confident and sarcastic: "Cancel the election? Who'll take the decision? I'm now the biggest boss here."

While that scandal was unfolding, Lebed made an astonishing confession in the depths of Siberia. When asked who provided his funds, the

founder of the Honour and Fatherland party said: "People who work and earn money, and who like you, tend to be on the fiddle. I won't name them, otherwise the public prosecutor will go and see them. Isn't that clear enough? I repeat: it's so-called 'grey' money — money honestly earned, but on which you pay no tax, because the tax system in this country is silly. It's a sin that everyone in Russia is unfortunately guilty of. Everyone."

This outburst, reported by the daily Ivestia, was made by Lebed at his first election meeting. In the stronghold of Krasnoyarsk's new boss, Anatoly Bykov, whose activities range from aluminium to the mass media and "charities".

Bykov is a man with an even murkier past than the mayor of Nizhny Novgorod. Yet Lebed had no compunction about taking him on as his chief aide in his bid to take power in Krasnoyarsk and later — who knows? — in Moscow.

(April 2)

The End of the Road

Rémy Ourdan reports from Murambi on a country trying to come to terms with the traumas left behind by the civil war

Living under the shadow of genocide

THE VILLAGE of Murambi, near Gikongoro in southern Rwanda, seems at first sight quite an ordinary place. It stands on a hill, which is dotted with brick houses, clumps of banana trees and neatly cultivated fields of sorghum. But its inhabitants are unsmiling, and their faces expressionless. This is a legacy of the massacres that took place here, as in many other Rwandan villages, in the spring of 1994. But in Murambi, the stench of death lingers on.

Emmanuel spends the whole day sprinkling the former school buildings with powder. "All those dead — I don't know if it was the will of God or the devil," he says pointing to a classroom. The floor is strewn with twisted children's corpses, some of them no more than skeletons, others still covered with desiccated flesh.

Solitary skulls have been laid out on a trestle table. "These are people who had their heads cut off," says Emmanuel, looking straight through me. All he can see are the corpses, exhumed from mass graves, and the bucket of chemical powder that is supposed to preserve human remains.

In 1994 up to 70,000 Tutsis took refuge in Murambi's school. There were only four survivors, according to Emmanuel: "Two men, one woman and one child, my daughter Kayitesi". All the others, including 28 of his relatives, were killed.

The Rwandan government in Kigali has decreed that the site of the massacre should be turned into a Memorial of the Genocide — the third and, one hopes, last 20th century genocide, recognised by the international community, after that of the Armenians by the Turks in 1915 and of the Jews by the Nazis.

Emmanuel remembers the massacre of April 1994: "Interahamwe Hutu militiamen fired at us, killing some and wounding others. They went from house to house, tossing grenades through the windows at women and children. They finished off the wounded with machetes and knives. The attack lasted two days. I was shot in the head and lost consciousness. They thought I was dead. The next night I managed to crawl into the bush. My whole family was exterminated, except for Kayitesi. She was saved by an old Hutu woman who found her after the massacre."

"When I came back, I agreed to work here. This is where the members of my family are, even if they're dead. I don't want people to draw a veil over those events, to deny that they ever happened. When they dug up the corpses, I couldn't sleep any more. I got drunk. I was certified insane. Now I know I'll stay here till the end of my days. I'm a first-aid worker — I go to the aid of the memory of the dead."

Historians put the number of Rwandans killed in 1994 at about 800,000. The vast majority were Tutsis, but Hutus were also murdered. Rwanda now lives in the shadow of that genocide. The survivors, haunted by the carnage and the loss of loved ones, face a continuing nightmare of murders, of justice not being done, of a denial of their suffering. The killers are torn between admitting to participating in the genocide, and strenuously denying any involvement, as do the majority of the Hutu community and a number of foreign intellectuals.



Hutu prisoners awaiting trial after the 1994 massacres

PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN ARBIB

Hutus and Tutsis still live side by side in Rwanda. The hounded, wounded, raped and humiliated Tutsis fear that the Hutus may be tempted to finish off the job. True, a Tutsi army has been in power since the military victory of the Tutsi guerrillas from Uganda, which ended the genocide. But Tutsis still account for only about 15 per cent of the population and are surrounded in their villages by potentially hostile neighbours.

Along with the killers, the rest of the Hutu population fears that the Tutsis may seek revenge and carry out a counter-massacre.

The 1994 killings were masterminded by Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, rebellious officers in the Rwandan Armed Forces (RAF), and members of other extremist movements who believed in Hutu supremacy. Under the cover of secret societies they had been planning the massacre for years. Their aim was to scuttle the Arusha accords — signed in 1993 by the government and the Tutsi rebels — and to exterminate Rwandan Tutsis.

They had a lot going for them: a society that was extremely hierarchical and disciplined, a farming community that was being slowly throttled by mounting poverty and a shortage of land, ethnic rivalry that had been thriving for 30 years, and

'Every Hutu family has at least one murderer, just as there's at least one victim in every Tutsi family'

an anti-Tutsi propaganda machine that had been in operation since the first attack by Tutsi guerrillas of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1990.

The murder of hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Tutsis was not the result of spontaneous killings or innate brutality, as has been suggested by the champions of a "Hutu-land/Tutoland" solution to the problems of Rwanda and Burundi, neighbouring and closely interconnected countries.

When Canadian general Roméo Dallaire, a former commander of the United Nations Aid Mission in Rwanda (Unamir), gave evidence before the international genocide tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania, in February, he stressed that the Hutus had been able to kill nearly 1 million people and move between 3 million and 4 million others out of the country within 14 weeks. "There was a methodology," he said.

It was easy for the Hutu extremists to find people to do their dirty work for them. Hordes of Hutu farmers massacred their Tutsi neighbours with machetes. Some were forced to do so, others took part enthusiastically. The Hutus organised festivities after the killings, got drunk and ate their booty (a goat or a cow). Never before had so many people who were neither under arms nor politically committed shed so much of their neighbours' blood.

"Crimes always went unpunished in Rwanda," says Alice Karekezi, a human rights activist. "There was genocide because there was impunity before that. Some people will naively tell you how many neighbours they killed, neighbours they used to drink with. It was nothing like the Nazi system. Murder had formed an almost integral part of daily life for decades. Some knew that they were going to die, and others that they were going to kill."

Earlier clashes were between regional clans and had no ethnic connotation. Hutus, Tutsis and Twas (pygmies) used to live together harmoniously. They spoke the same language. Mixed marriages were so common that although Hutus and Tutsis had and sometimes still have different physical characteristics, it is now difficult to tell the ethnic origins of most Rwandans from their physical alone.

"The colonisers, and especially the missionaries, sowed the first seeds of division," says Denis Poliss, an RPF ideologue. "They talked of the distant origins of the Tutsis. They introduced an identity card that indicated the holder's ethnic group and gave all the privileges to those they called Tutsis."

In 1925 the Belgian colonial

ministry issued a report in which it described the Twas as physically similar to the monkeys whose forests they inhabited. They were a race that was "becoming extinct". The Hutus were "small, squat, with jolly faces, very flat noses and huge lips, expansive, noisy, cheerful and simple".

"The Tutsis," it went on, "are a fine race that are negro in no way

'Unless something is done, this country will become one huge psychiatric hospital in the next 10 years'

except for their skin colour. They are very tall. Their features, when young, are very pure — a straight forehead, an aquiline nose and thin lips covering dazzling teeth. Highly intelligent, they often display a delicacy of feeling that is surprising for a primitive people, and possess extraordinary self-control."

Ethnic divisions began to wreak havoc. For the oppressed Hutus, the Tutsis were seen not only as tyrants in league with the colonial power, but foreigners from distant lands such as Ethiopia. The killers of Tutsis in 1994 who bothered to take away the corpses often threw them into rivers, such as the Yangorabo, which flow in the direction of East Africa.

In 1959 settlers and missionaries switched horses and supported the Hutu "social revolution". The Tutsis were overthrown and many went into exile. Their children joined the ranks of the RPF, which came to power in 1994.

Between the arrival of the first German settlers at the end of the 19th century and the genocide a century later, there was a gradual change in attitudes that had a bearing on the tragedy.

"Decades of religious fervour and submission to authority were partly responsible for the extreme behaviour that took place in 1994. Hutu farmers did not refuse to take part in the massacres. And the Tutsis, instead of organising resistance in

the hills, took refuge in local administrative buildings and churches, symbols of authority, when many were organising genocide locally and Hutu priests rarely opposed it. The Tutsis were led like lambs to the slaughter."

At the Arusha tribunal a judge asked a witness why she had gone to the local administrative building when she knew that people were being killed there. The witness said: "I did so because I knew people were shot there. I didn't want to be killed by clubs and machetes." Another witness said: "One Tutsi bought a grenade so the interahamwes would kill him with it rather than use their machetes or cut off his fingers or ears."

Attitudes have not changed over the years. Villagers rarely question an order. "A chief is a chief in this country," says Poliss. "Respect for authority must remain a fundamental response, but we want to encourage the population to take part in the decision-making process. They're going to be choosing the delegates. We're preparing the ground for democracy."

While waiting for the advent of democracy, which has never existed here and which is not something that the RPF is committed to, the Rwandan population continues to maintain a stubborn silence.

This natural, almost sacred, sense of obedience is mirrored by the trauma of those who took part in the genocide. "Every Hutu family has at least one murderer, just as there's at least one victim in every Tutsi family," says Anastase Mumbura, a Rwandan official.

"Here you have a specific kind of traumatic experience," says Lincoln Ndigoni, a psychiatrist with the United States Organisation World Vision. "The survivors are naturally traumatised, bitter and angry. They have fits of fear and depression. And the killers are traumatised too. They ask themselves questions, such as 'Why did I kill?' 'Am I guilty?' 'If I killed five people, would I have been able to kill 10?'"

"Children killed people. They were given a machete and told to go and kill their neighbours. Women killed people and, something that's extremely rare in war, they killed children. At the moment I'm treating a Hutu woman who was married to a Tutsi, and who threw her own child into the river. Every day for the past three years, she has been going to the banks of the river — she can't understand what happened to her child."

"I'm also seeing a woman who tried to save her son by disguising him as a girl. The militiamen found her out and, to punish her, forced her to bury her boy alive. She cannot forget his last words: 'Mummy, stop playing, stop throwing earth in my face, stop playing.'"

"Unless something is done, this country will become one huge psychiatric hospital in the next 10 or 20 years. The children of the genocide will turn into traumatised and maladjusted adults. What they will have learnt from the genocide is that they can't trust a neighbour, an army, or their parents."

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The Washington Post

Lingering Questions

EDITORIAL

DEMOCRATS lost no time using the dismissal of Paula Jones' sexual harassment case to pressure independent counsel Kenneth Starr to wrap up his criminal investigation. The argument is somewhat muddled, but it seems to be that the public does not care much about the remaining allegations, that Mr. Starr's rather unpopular investigation has gone on too long already, and that the verdict provides a kind of global vindication for the president.

Mr. Starr should, like all independent counsels, conduct his probe as quickly as he can, but the suggestion that the dismissal of the Jones case should hasten or moot the rest of his investigation is wrongheaded. Mr. Starr has a series of questions before him that are of varying degrees of public importance but which all require answers before he can fold up shop. These questions include:

Q Whether, as Mr. Starr's original mandate put it, "any individuals or entities have committed a violation of federal criminal law . . . relating in any way to James B. McDougal's, President William Jefferson Clinton's, or Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton's relationships" with Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan Association.

Q Whether White House officials led to investigators prob-

ing the firing of the White House Travel Office employees.

Q Whether White House officials broke any laws when they acquired and hoarded hundreds of FBI background files on prominent Republicans.

Q Whether the president committed perjury when he denied under oath groping Kathleen Willey and having a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

Q Whether the president urged Ms. Lewinsky to submit a false affidavit to a federal court.

Q Whether any White House official obstructed justice (or conspired to do so) by getting Ms. Lewinsky a job or by giving "talking points" to Linda Tripp to change her testimony concerning Ms. Willey's encounter with the president.

It is worth emphasizing that the importance of none of these questions depends on the merits of Ms. Jones' case. If it is important — and we believe that it is — for the public to know whether the president lied under oath and obstructed justice, it should not be less so because the president ultimately prevailed in the case.

Mr. Starr is in the unenviable position of running an investigation of a distasteful subject concerning the president in a politically charged environment while being, himself, under assault. He has done himself no favors with his extrajudicial political activities, his occasionally inappropriate subpoenas



President Clinton winds up his African tour in Senegal last week, where he heard of the dismissal of Paula Jones' case. PHOTO: GREG GIBSON

and his almost-casual disregard for the appearance of impartiality. But neither these shortcomings nor the summary judgment in the Jones case should be read to prejudge the questions his

investigation must ultimately answer. Mr. Starr's obligation remains unchanged: He needs to address the matters within his jurisdiction thoroughly and expeditiously.

Ex-Agent on Spy Charge

COMMENT

Jim Hoagland

ADISGRUNTLED former CIA operative was charged last week with espionage for informing two foreign governments that U.S. intelligence agencies had cracked their secret communications and for revealing the methods for obtaining the codes, wrote Roberto Suro and Peter Steins.

Douglas F. Groat, 50, of Manassas, Virginia, entered not guilty pleas to five charges, including two that carry a penalty of death. His alleged crimes "could have a significant impact on the national security," U.S. Attorney Wilma A. Lewis said after his arraignment.

During a 16-year career at the CIA, Groat "participated in classified covert operations" aimed at penetrating the secret codes and communications systems employed by foreign governments, Lewis said. He worked in units that broke codes and stole them and focused on both friendly and hostile governments, officials said.

Groat is charged with giving two unidentified governments classified information concerning the "targeting and compromise" of their "cryptographic systems" in March and April 1997, less than six months after he had been fired from the CIA.

Political Market Divided Over Money

COMMENT

Jim Hoagland

MONEY has become the overwhelming force of American politics, both as means and end. But Europe has taken a different route. National political battles in England, France and Germany are still fought along social and ideological lines that are being blurred or obliterated in the United States by the monetarization of politics.

The French right is at the moment deconstructing itself piecemeal in a struggle over racism, immigration and the meaning of the French past. Ideas — even confused ideas — are the driving impulses of French politics, not promises to balance the budget or to free the stock market to reach new heights. In Britain, concerns about social justice and management of the welfare system trumped the Conservatives' record of prosperity last year and helped Tony Blair's New Labor build a dominating parliamentary majority that may rule for a decade.

And in Germany, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's opening campaign salvo which warned that his leftist opponents will run the economy into the ground if they win September's elections have fallen flat. The country's 13 percent unemployment rate hangs like an albatross around Kohl's neck, who for once faces a credible Social Democrat rival in Gerhard Schröder.

The right in Europe's most impor-

tant countries is being hollowed out at a time when conservatives are setting the agenda on this side of the Atlantic. The European right has failed to make the marketplace the arbiter and centerpiece of politics, as has progressively happened in America.

A sentiment of better-the-devil-we-know is the biggest threat to Kohl in his run for a fourth term. Nothing he has tried has stopped or even slowed Germany's slide into economic quagmire.

Part of the European right's decline is generational. Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives and Kohl's Christian Democratic Union-led coalition first came to power nearly two decades ago. Ambitious and competent younger politicians had to go into opposition to see daylight. Another part of the decline is tactical: France's neo-Gaullists and their pro-business allies on the right have blundered into a series of separate but related traps set by the Socialists and the extremist right-wing forces led by Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front, and squandered the political and moral authority they once possessed.

But the crisis of confidence Europe's conservatives are experiencing also illuminates the success their nominal counterparts in America have had in redefining the tools and terms of politics.

Money is being depoliticized in Europe as the technocrats of the European Union use treaty commitments and continental monetary

units to regulate national budget deficits, monetary supply and much of fiscal policy. National assemblies yield powers to Brussels so they can also shed the risks of unpopular spending cuts and/or new taxes.

This supranational financial discipline, which Blair has said Britain wants to join in a few years, deprives European conservatives of their heaviest ideological artillery. They have not found a convincing replacement for the now waning subliminal assumption by the electorate that the right exists to grow the economy through superior financial expertise. For better or worse, the arrival of the euro currency will vastly increase the disconnect between politics and money in Europe.

But in America the marketplace of campaign finance increasingly rules the lives of politicians in each election, and the behavior of the stock market weighs heavily on the scales of their fate in office.

Pocketbook issues have always been paramount in American politics. But other matters — social justice, the integrity of our leaders, U.S. leadership in the world, to name a few — have perhaps never been driven so far to the margins of the national attention span and political discourse by material concerns as they are today.

In America's current politics of bread and circus, Europeans almost certainly find more to envy than they have at any time since World War II — and less to admire.

U.N. Panel Calls for Halt To Execution

John M. Goshko in New York

IN A report certain to exacerbate the badly strained relations between the United Nations and Congress, the U.N. Human Rights Commission has concluded that the United States applies the death penalty unfairly, and called for a moratorium on further executions.

Specifically, the report says that some U.S. states carry out executions in an arbitrary and discriminatory manner that does not spare juveniles, the retarded or the mentally ill. It adds that these practices violate obligations imposed on the United States by various international agreements and says the federal government should halt all executions while it brings the states into compliance with international standards and law.

The report was written by Bacre Waly Ndiaye of Senegal, an investigator for the Geneva-based rights commission, who carried out a fact-finding mission in the United States last October that triggered considerable criticism from congressional conservatives. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, R-North Carolina, called Ndiaye's mission "an absurd U.N. charade."

"With all the abuses in places like Burma, China, Cuba and Iraq, to be wasting time and money to investigate the freest country in the world shows what a strange and distant planet the United Nations inhabits," Marc Thiessen, a spokesman for Helms said last week. "I hope the U.N. will send this report to every single U.S. citizen so they can see how their money is being spent by an institution so badly in need of top-to-bottom reform."

Helms' anger could have serious negative consequences for the effort to get the United States to pay more than \$1 billion in debts to the United Nations. Helms has been at the center of efforts to broker a compromise on the payments, but he has been increasingly hostile to the world body and to Secretary General Kofi Annan, including him in a reference to "U.N. crybabies who whine about not receiving enough of the American taxpayers' money."

Since last month, when Annan went to Baghdad and negotiated an inspection agreement with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that staved off a U.S. threat of aerial attacks on Iraq, the secretary general has been criticized severely by congressional conservatives who saw his mission as appeasement.

Clinton administration officials said last week that they had not seen Ndiaye's report and could not comment on it. In the past, they had sought to play down its significance. When he visited the United States last year, Ndiaye, a former official of Amnesty International, was rebuffed in efforts to interview Cabinet officials and Supreme Court justices. He talked only with officials of middle to low rank.

In his report, he said the United States was in violation of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which established conditions for the application of the death penalty.

She is in it

Police Chief Arrested In Chiapas

John Ward Anderson
In Mexico City

A TOP police official from the southern Mexican state of Chiapas was arrested last week for standing by and doing nothing in December last year as a group of armed men massacred 45 unarmed peasants in the hillside hamlet of Acteal, the attorney-general's office said in an statement.

Julio Cesar Santiago Diaz, a retired army general serving as chief of staff of the Chiapas state police and head of the state's auxiliary police force, was in the area with other police officers for five hours while the massacre occurred, the statement said. "He heard sporadic gunshots and machine-gun bursts, but he did not intervene or ask for help from a nearby police detachment," it said.

Instead, Santiago hid in the Acteal schoolhouse and reported to his superiors that nothing unusual was happening, the statement said.

Santiago is the highest-ranking official detained so far in connection with the massacre, which brought renewed attention to the conflict and stalled peace negotiations in Chiapas. A cease-fire has held in the impoverished state since indigenous rebels known as "Zapatistas" staged a rebellion on January 1, 1994, demanding greater indigenous rights. More than 140 people were killed in the 10-day revolt.

Survivors of the Acteal massacre — the worst violence since the opening days of the conflict — said that their attackers were members of an armed paramilitary-style group aligned with Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party. The survivors said that they themselves are members of a group called Las Abejas, or the Bees, that supports the goals of the Zapatista uprising but not its armed struggle.

It was unclear why Santiago was in the vicinity of Acteal on the day of the attack, and the attorney-general's office refused to elaborate beyond the one-page statement. The statement did not say why Santiago would report that nothing was happening when he was in the midst of a bloodbath that left 21 women, 15 children and nine men dead, raising the question of whether Santiago could have organized or participated in the attack.

Numerous human rights groups, social workers and Catholic Church officials have said that in the weeks before the massacre, and on the day of the attack, they warned the government that serious trouble was brewing, but that the government did nothing to reduce tensions or stop the assault. The incident forced the resignations of Mexico's interior minister and the Chiapas governor and state attorney-general.

It also was unclear when Santiago served with the Mexican army and when he began working with the Chiapas police. Both institutions refused last week to answer questions about his service record.

The federal attorney-general's office also announced that it had arrested an active army soldier, Mariano Perez Ruiz, for allegedly supplying army weapons and training to the attackers, some of whom were from Perez's hometown near Acteal.

Neither Santiago nor Perez has yet been charged.



A BOY holds a Martin Luther King Jr. sign at a march in Memphis, Tennessee, last week to mark the 30th anniversary of the assassination of the civil rights leader.

On Monday President Clinton asked Attorney General Janet Reno to discuss with King's family their request for a new investigation into the shooting. A congressional committee and several law enforcement agencies have concluded that King was killed on April 4, 1968,

by James Earl Ray, acting alone. Ray confessed to the crime but almost immediately recanted.

Speaking at the "pilgrimage" in Memphis, Rev. Jesse Jackson joined calls by King's widow for the appointment of a federal commission to investigate the murder. Last week Coretta Scott King publicly called on President Clinton to press for the examination of "new evidence." King family members have speculated that the FBI was involved.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW CUTRARA

Clinton Presses Japan on Economy

Paul Blustein

JAPAN came under intensified pressure last week to rescue its faltering economy as the country's gold-plated credit rating was called into question. Tokyo stocks fell anew and President Clinton warned that Japanese officials "have to make a break" with their past policies.

Moody's Investors Service, an influential U.S. bond rating firm, delivered a psychological blow to Tokyo by announcing that it had changed its outlook on Japan's government debt from "stable" to "negative." Although the company maintained its triple-A rating on Japanese government-backed bonds, even the hint that it might downgrade Tokyo's government obligations underscored the mounting sense of pessimism over Japan's prospects.

The announcement came one day after Sony Corp. chairman Norio Ohga voiced his fear that the Japanese economy was "on the verge of collapsing," and a quarterly survey of Japanese business sentiment found that confidence had plunged.

The cascade of bad news dropped the Nikkei-225 Stock Average to 15,177.8, putting stock prices uncomfortably close to levels at which Japanese banks will find it tough to meet international capital requirements because a significant portion of their capital is invested in the stock market. The yen fell to a 6-year low against the dollar, closing at 135.10.

The deepening gloom in Tokyo raised fears in Washington and other capitals that the world's second-largest economy is headed for a worse recession than the stagnant growth it has suffered for most of the past seven years. That would come at a particularly inopportune time for crisis-stricken Asian countries, which depend on Japan as a market for their exports.

President Clinton weighed in with comments reflecting U.S. concerns that time is rapidly running out on the government of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who is struggling to mobilize a consensus by mid-May among ruling-party politicians and the powerful bureaucracy about measures to stimulate the economy.

Washington has been prodding Tokyo with increasing urgency to boost domestic consumption because U.S. officials fear that Japan exporting its way out of its troubles will impose a drag on the global economy and hurt U.S. industries that compete with Japanese firms.

"We need to be both respectful but firm in urging the Japanese to take a bold course," Clinton said. He called on the Japanese government "to realize that the strategies that worked in the past are not appropriate to the present. They have to make a break now."

The reasons for Japan's predicament are complicated. Hashimoto has staked his political fortunes on a policy emphasizing tight control over government budget deficits on the grounds that a rapidly aging Japan needs to avoid borrowing and increase saving to prepare for retirement costs in the next century.

That approach has made it awkward for the prime minister to reverse course even after it became clear that a consumption-tax increase he promoted a year ago was causing the already-fragile economy to lose steam.

U.S. administration officials and many private analysts argue that Japan must take drastic action to rid its banks of hundreds of billions of dollars in bad loans so they can lend more freely. The country has a long tradition of banks keeping weak borrowers alive.

A Japanese economics professor, Takatoshi Ito of Hitotsubashi University, agreed that Moody's move, combined with the slide in Tokyo stock prices and deterioration in business confidence, would help force Hashimoto's hand. "I think the government will take it seriously," he said. "It's the market, and the businesses, pressing the government to do something—I think the government will respond to it. I hope they do."

In London, where he was attending a meeting of European and Asian leaders, Hashimoto acknowledged "various concerns from abroad" regarding the state of the Japanese economy. But, he said, "Japan will take the necessary measures and, at the same time, provide assistance to the countries of Asia as well."

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New Wave of Immigrants Tests a Dream

William Booth

THE beginning of this century, as steamers poured into American ports, their steerage filled with European immigrants, a Jew from England named Zyngwille penned a play whose line has long been forgotten, whose central theme has not. The production was entitled "The Immigrant" and its message still rings a tremendous power on the imagination — the promise that all immigrants can be transformed into Americans, a new alloy of race and civic responsibility.

In 1908, when the play opened in London, the United States was in the middle of absorbing the influx of immigrants in its history — Irish and Germans, followed by Italians and East Europeans, Catholics and Jews — some of whom were citizens between 1900 and 1920.

Today, the United States is experiencing its second great wave of immigration, a movement of people whose profound implications for a country that by tradition pays homage to its immigrant roots while at the same time it confronts complex and deeply ingrained ethnic divisions.

Immigrants of today come from Europe but overwhelm it, from the still developing world and Latin America. They are a demographic shift so rapid within the lifetimes of today's citizens, no one ethnic group — including whites of European descent — will comprise a majority of the nation's population.

That shift, according to social scientists, demographers and others, is the trend, will severely challenge the premise of the faded dream, the idea, so central to our identity, that this country is a melting pot of every color and background into "one American." Just as possible, they say, is the nation will continue to fracture into many separate, disconnected communities with no shared sense of commonality or purpose.

It is between, a pluralistic society that will hold on to some core values about citizenship and capital, but with little meaningful interaction among groups.

The demographic changes raise questions about political and



Cubans in Miami: Hispanics will likely outnumber blacks early in the next century

PHOTO: DON MURPHY

economic power. Will that power, now held disproportionately by whites, be shared in the new America? What will happen when Hispanics overtake blacks as the nation's single largest minority?

Fear of strangers, of course, is nothing new in American history. The last great immigration wave produced a bitter backlash, epitomized by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the return, in the 1930s, of the Ku Klux Klan, which not only targeted blacks but Catholics, Jews and immigrants as well.

Despite this strife, many historians argue that there was a greater consensus in the past on what it meant to be an American, a yearning for a common language and culture, and a desire to assimilate. Today, they say, there is more emphasis on preserving one's ethnic identity, of finding ways to highlight and defend one's cultural roots. The question is whether, in the midst of such change, there is also enough glue to hold Americans together.

In high school cafeterias, the second and third generation children of immigrants clump together in cliques defined by where their parents or grandparents were born. At the law school of the University of California at Los Angeles, which has about 1,000 students, there are

separate student associations for blacks, Latinos and Asians with their own law review journal.

It almost goes without saying that today's new arrivals are a source of vitality and energy, especially in the big cities to which many are attracted. Diversity, almost everyone agrees, is good; choice is good; exposure to different cultures and ideas is good.

But many scholars worry about the loss of community and shared sense of reality among Americans, what Todd Gitlin, a professor of culture and communications at New York University, calls "the twilight of common dreams." The concern is echoed by many on both the left and right, and of all ethnicities, but no one seems to know exactly what to do about it.

Researchers already speak of a new "demographic balkanization," not only of residential segregation, forced or chosen but also a powerful preference to see ourselves through a racial prism, wary of others, and, in many instances, hostile.

The demographic shifts are smudging the old lines demarcating two historical, often distinct societies, one black and one white. Reshaped by three decades of rapidly rising immigration, the national story is now far more complicated.

Whites account for 74 percent of the population, blacks 12 percent, Hispanics 10 percent and Asians 3 percent. Yet according to data and predictions generated by the U.S. Census Bureau and social scientists poring over the numbers, Hispanics will likely surpass blacks early in the next century. And by the year 2050, demographers predict, Hispanics will account for 25 percent of the population, blacks 14 percent, Asians 8 percent, with whites hovering somewhere around 53 percent.

CONGRESS triggered this transformation in 1965, when it made family reunification the primary criteria for admittance. That policy, a response to charges that the law favored white Europeans, allowed immigrants already in the country to bring over their relatives, who in turn could bring over more relatives. As a result, America has been absorbing as many as 1 million newcomers a year, to the point that now almost one in every 10 residents is foreign born.

The intake, relative to the overall population, was slightly higher at the beginning of this century, but the current immigration wave is in many ways very different, and its context inexorably altered, from the last great wave.

This time around, tensions are sharpened by the changing profile of those who are entering America's borders. Not only are their racial and ethnic backgrounds more varied than in decades past, their place in a modern postindustrial economy has also been recast.

The newly arrived today can be roughly divided into two camps: those with college degrees and highly specialized skills, and those with almost no education or job training. Some 12 percent of immigrants have graduate degrees, compared to 8 percent of native Americans. But more than one-third of the immigrants have no high school diploma, double the rate for those born in the United States. About 6 percent of new arrivals receive some form of welfare, double the rate for U.S.-born citizens.

With large numbers of immigrants arriving from Latin America, and segregating in barrios, there is also evidence of lingering language problems. Consider that in Miami, three-quarters of residents speak a language other than English at home and 67 percent of those say they are not fluent in English. In New York City, four of every 10 residents speak a language other than English at home, and of these, half said they do not speak English well.

It is clear that not all of America is experiencing the impact of immigration equally. But as the immigrants arrive, many American-born citizens leave in search of new homes in more homogeneous locales. New York and Los Angeles each lost more than 1 million native-born residents between 1980 and 1995, even as their populations increased by roughly the same numbers with immigrants. To oversimplify, said University of Michigan demographer William Frey, "For every Mexican who comes to Los Angeles, a white native-born leaves."

Most of the people leaving the big cities are white and they tend to be working class. This is an entirely new kind of "white flight," whereby whites are not just fleeing the city centers for the suburbs but also are leaving the region, and often the state.

Frey sees in this pattern "the emergence of separate Americas, one white and middle-aged, less urban and another intensely urban, young, multicultural and multiethnic. One America will care deeply about English as the official language and about preserving Social Security. The other will care about things like retaining affirmative action and bilingual education."

Pipe Bombs Become Toys for Teens

Fern Shen

MAKING a pipe bomb is a cinch, a group of bomb-savvy junior high school boys said one afternoon recently, after stepping off the school bus into their new subdivision in northern Montgomery County, Maryland.

"It's easy. A kid in fifth grade could do it," a 14-year-old wearing an oversized trench coat said matter-of-factly. Much more interesting to this group in Germantown were discussions of which propellants are best to use, which Web sites have the best recipes and whether tin or aluminum soda cans make better bomb casings.

"I go over to this auto shop, where they sell parts and everything, and look for anything with ether in it... That makes a nice

blast," said a 13-year-old in baggy pants.

The casual discussion illustrates a frightening trend: Young people in many parts of the country have been making sophisticated explosive devices in increasing numbers since the early 1990s, and bringing them into their schools in many cases, say bomb experts, education associations and officials at the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. And evidence shows they're not just being made as childish pranks, but as weapons that are intended to destroy and even kill.

"These cases are starting to cross the line from 'boys will be boys' to real attempts to cause injury," said David Kyallko, a spokesman for the National Association of State Boards of Education, which is concerned

about the apparent increase in teenage bomb-making activity.

The recent discovery of a powerful pipe bomb in Montgomery County's Rocky Hill Middle School is a case in point. On February 27 the school was evacuated after a bomb was found in a student's locker. Prosecutors say 14-year-old Domingo Luyo Jr. intended to use the device, which another student built, to kill his grandfather.

Such incidents began to crop up with alarming frequency in the early 1990s, according to the ATF, prompting the bureau's statisticians to begin tracking them. They found that youths were involved in a disproportionate share — 33 percent — of the fast-rising total number of U.S. bombing cases, which doubled between 1985 and 1995. Juvenile bombings increased

from 774 in 1992, the first year the ATF began tracking such cases, to 1,126 in 1994. That number declined to 931 in 1995, the most recent year for which figures are available, but officials say they think the numbers will continue to rise.

Experts say the reasons for the trend remain murky, but they cite the availability of detailed bomb-making instructions on the Internet, parents' inattentiveness, and high-profile cases such as the Olympic Park bombing in Atlanta, abortion clinic attacks and the activities of the so-called Unabomber as factors that may have captured youths' interest.

Bombs apparently are becoming so common that students give them as gifts. Last October, a 13-year-old from Corvallis, Oregon, gave a classmate a flower and a gift-wrapped pipe bomb for her birthday and instructions on how to use it.

Race Helps Soccer Score Over Old Sports

Howard Schneider in Toronto

THE ROYAL Canadian Curling Club enjoyed plenty of banner years during its first 100 years. It won provincial championships in 1981 and again in 1986. Senior team won in 1992. Winners of the Allan Challenge Cup in 1938. Curling leagues for kids, seniors and regular "bongspiel" tournaments with other curling groups. The club also served as a social center for the downtown neighborhood. For the club, a working example of Canada's loosely constructed social structure.

These days, however, the members of "The Royals" are spending much time discussing survival and even their club might produce its own provincial. Membership is down

roughly 50 percent, and the club's finances are so tenuous the owners are debating whether to close.

The sport of curling, in which large, smooth rocks are slid shuffleboard-style across a sheet of ice toward a bull's-eye, is as popular as ever in Canada, a de facto national pastime for adults.

Rather, it's a reflection of how Canada's increasingly interracial reality is reshaping the country's major cities. It may have been natural, first for the English and Scots, and later the Latvians and Ukrainians, to embrace a sport that blended sliding across the ice on your knees with lots of time to socialize. It has proved much tougher for the Royals to find an audience among the Asian residents who have created one of Toronto's three Chinatowns a few blocks from the Royals' rink.

Curling's following is "basically... the old-style Canadian," said Royals president Dave Craddock. Drive through almost any small Canadian town, he said, and "There's almost always a liquor store, a [Royal Canadian] Legion and a curling club, usually within close proximity."

Those towns are almost all white, according to newly released information from a Statistics Canada census that for the first time asked Canadians about their race. With the advent of employment equity laws, multicultural programs and other policies whose monitoring requires race-specific data, Canadian census officials decided they should unambiguously identify what are referred to here as "visible minorities."

The data confirmed that Canada's image as an increasingly diverse and multicultural society ends at the boundaries of Toronto, Vancouver

and Montreal, major cities where nearly 75 percent of the country's nonwhite population lives. Half of Canada's 10 provinces have minority populations of less than 4 percent, and three of only 1 percent.

Overall, the portion of Canada's population that is nonwhite is half that of the United States: about 11 percent, or roughly 3.2 million people. Nearly half are Chinese or South Asian; about 570,000 are black.

"The notion of Canada as a tolerant, multiracial, multilingual society is part and parcel of the way we have defined ourselves," said Robert Glossop, executive director of programs for the Vanier Institute on the Family. "However, up until recently, Canada has never been up to the test to really deliver..." This diverse cultural complexion is not equally spread across the country.

That's a fact that the Royals, now in the middle of a city that is nearly one-third nonwhite, must cope with if they are to survive, Craddock said.

Across town, in a cavernous airplane hangar that has been converted into an indoor soccer complex, Francois Glasman is coping with the opposite problem: how to accommodate nearly 300 teams of men, women and children from around the world who want to play on the five artificial-turf fields he developed at the old Downsview military base.

More Canadians are registered in soccer leagues now than in hockey leagues, and on any given night you can hear them at Glasman's facility, encouraging each other in Arabic, Spanish and, yes, English.

"Way back, Canadians used to call soccer an ethnic game," Glasman said. "No more... This has very much a world soccer flavor. When people are here, they could be in Brazil or Italy or France or England. The pot has really melted. The fact that you hear many languages — that is the fabric of our society."

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20 APPOINTMENTS & COURSES

Eastern Africa Regional Office

Mount Elgon (Kenya) Integrated Conservation and Development Project, Phase 1

IUCN - The World Conservation Union is providing technical support to the Government of Kenya in implementing the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project. The Project is to be implemented in partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Forest Department in the Ministry of Natural Resources. It aims at contributing to the long-term conservation of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem by: providing support for improved management and sustainable use of its resources; building effective partnerships for conservation between multiple stakeholders; capacity building for local institutions and personnel; and promoting equitable sharing of benefits. IUCN also provides technical advice to a similar ongoing project implemented by the Uganda Wildlife Authority on the Ugandan side of Mt. Elgon.

The project seeks to recruit the following officers:

Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)

The CTA will be the principal focal point and co-ordinator for the delivery of IUCN's technical assistance in implementing the project. She/he will work closely with the Project Manager, and will be responsible for co-ordinating technical support and advice to the project staff in the implementation of the project. In accordance with the project document, in particular s/he will be responsible for co-ordinating the technical input for the formulation of a long-term integrated management plan for the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. S/he will liaise with project partners and other relevant bodies in the planning and overseeing of project activities at ecosystem district, and village levels in biodiversity conservation and management.

The candidate should have at least a second degree in a relevant field and a minimum of fifteen years professional experience in natural resource management some of which should be in Africa. Experience should, in particular, cover forest and protected area management, integration of ecosystem concerns into regional and district planning processes.

Experience in leading field based teams and working with communities is required. Knowledge of the English language is essential. Knowledge of Kiswahili would be an added advantage.

Rural Development Advisor (RDA)

The RDA will provide technical guidance regarding community participation in the conservation of the Mount Elgon ecosystem and other related community development activities. In particular, s/he will be responsible for providing advice and support to the District Project co-ordinators, and facilitate liaison between the project, District authorities and neighbouring communities, in the development and promotion of sustainable practices for management and utilisation of natural resources. The RDA will co-ordinate the implementation of socio-economic and other related studies, and advise on ways of increasing the participation of women in project activities. She/he will also coordinate the development of a comprehensive rural participation framework.

The candidate should have at least a second degree in a relevant discipline and professional experience of at least ten years, some of which should be in Africa. The experience should cover such areas as, community participatory processes in resource management, rural socio-economic surveys in developing countries, as well as gender related issues. Knowledge of the English language is essential. Knowledge of Kiswahili would be an added advantage.

Both posts will be based in Kitale in western Kenya, but staff will be expected to travel regularly for field work within the two Districts: Trans-Nzoia and Mt. Elgon. The posts are two-and-a-half-year positions with a possibility of extension. Project start-up is April 1998.

Prospective candidates should send letters of application, detailed curriculum vitae and names and contacts of three professional referees to: The Regional Representative, IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office, P.O. Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya or fax 254 2 890815 by May 2nd 1998. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



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For further details of any of the above staff vacancies please contact ACU (Advertising), 38 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, UK (Internat. tel. +44 171 357 8572 ext. 208 [UK office hours]; fax +44 171 353 0388; e-mail: apof@acu.ac.uk), quoting reference number of post(s). Details will be sent by airmail/first class post.

A sample copy of the publication *Appointments in Commonwealth Universities*, including subscription details, is available from the same source.

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For further information contact: Mrs Rowena Kochanowska, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 28 Russell Square, London WC1B 6DS. Tel: 0171 580 5876. Closing date: 31 May 1998.

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Candidates must have a 2:1 Honours Degree (or equivalent) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering (or related discipline) and have a PhD, or expect shortly to obtain one, in a relevant subject. A strong research track record (minimum 3 years) in a relevant field, as demonstrated by publications in major journals or conferences is essential. Sustainable research activity and good interpersonal and presentation skills are also essential.

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Informal enquiries may be made to either:
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Applications quoting reference number may obtain further particulars from the Personnel Office, The Queen's University of Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT7 1NN, by telephoning 01232 327320 or 278344 or 278344 (toll-free) or by fax 01232 335444.

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Life exists precariously on the Antarctic ice, but it may be abundant in vast lakes below. PHOTO: CHERRY ALEXANDER

A world untouched for 30 million years

Tim Radford

SCIENTISTS are poised to explore a mysterious lost world nearly four kilometres below Antarctica. A huge lake, insulated by millions of years of ice, could hold living creatures that inhabited the planet more than 30 million years ago.

British, French, German, Russian and United States scientists met in St Petersburg last month to agree on what will, in effect, be a landing on another planet: the painstaking venture into a body of water the size of Lake Ontario, more than 3,600m under the icecap at the Russian base of Vostok. The Russians have already penetrated to within 150 metres of the surface of the water. But then the drilling had to stop.

The researchers face a problem. They have to find a way to explore the mysterious world of Lake Vostok without contaminating it with life from the surface.

They know that there will be forms of life down there: Russian and US microbiologists have been examining microbes in samples of ice laid down 400,000 years ago.

"We've found some really bizarre things — things that we have never seen before," said Richard Hoover of Nasa. He and his Russian colleague have given the microscopic creatures temporary nicknames, such as Klingon, Mickey Mouse, Porpoise and Sphere. The discovery at such depths raises the hope that even stranger things lie waiting to be discovered under Vostok.

Cyanus Ellis-Evans of the British Antarctic Survey, one of the experts at the St Petersburg meeting, said that the researchers were likely to use a hot-water lance to cut deeper into the ice. Then they plan to lower a thermal probe, which will sterilise itself as it descends. The ice will freeze again and close behind it.

"It's a one way trip, isolating itself from microbes in the upper ice," Dr Ellis-Evans said. "We are expecting to find new things... it is like going to another planet."

Nobody knows why lakes should exist under the largest body of ice on the planet. Antarctica was once a mild, forested landscape; even now, geologists are still discovering fossil ferns and carnivorous dinosaurs in the polar mountains.

The glaciers began to close over the continent 40 million years ago. Lake Vostok could be in a rift valley — a deep fissure in the continent's crust — and if it is, the huge depth of sediment below the water could be a "time capsule" of the planet's history.

Some geologists argue that there could be some form of volcanic heat deep in the rocks providing the energy for unusual forms of life. But there are other hypotheses: for instance, ice may have melted to form the lake as it sheared over the bedrock.

More than 99 per cent of Antarctica is covered in thick ice — but there could be hundreds of lakes below the ice sheet.

"Every single one of them could be, potentially, of significance," said Dr Ellis-Evans. "This is a whole new world opening up for us."

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

IS THERE a finite number of people in line to the English Channel? If so, who is last?

OSBERT, who died in 839AD, is generally reckoned to be the first King of England. Most English, Welsh, Scots, Irish, Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders and North Americans, together with a substantial number of people from Europe and the Middle East, will be descended from him. Several people have made valiant efforts to list all known royal descendants, but without more than partial success.

Even if we could list them all, getting them into the correct batting order would present immense difficulties. The throne of England has often passed on a pragmatic rather than theoretical grounds. Devising a rule which validates everything that has actually happened is not that easy.

For example, both Bloody Mary and Good Queen Bess were legally illegitimate at the time of their successions, yet the claims of others have been rejected on similar grounds.

Roman Catholics are barred by canon law from the papacy, yet the Pope is the Pope. — *David Jackish, Cusack, Durham*

WHERE does the phrase "by a long chalk" come from?

IT REFERS to marking with chalk (before lead pencils were in common use) the points that a player or team has won in a game. A "long chalk" means a large number of points, so a great deal. A further reference is to the old custom in alehouses of writing up with chalk the amount of credit given. — *Basil Morgan, Uppingham, Norfolk*

HAS anyone ever seriously researched time travel?

MARGARET THATCHER had the 'British' returning to the Victorian era. And General Curtis LeMay tried to bomb the Vietnamese back to the Stone Age. — *Ken Frank, Claremont, California, USA*

WHY is the lion referred to as "the king of the jungle" when it lives in open country?

JUNGLE is a Hindi word meaning "not an inhabited place". The word "covers forest, wilderness, wild, waste, even the world" (without human structures). The emphasis

is on emptiness. Much of what is called jungle in India is steppe or nearly desert. — *Jim McManus, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire*

Any answers?

WHAT became of the first man to put his head in a lion's mouth? Has this been tried with a tiger? — *Gerard Mathay, Nesscliffe, Shropshire*

WHAT is scruggin', as in scruggin' cake? — *E. Kwoit, Cheshire*

WHAT is the origin of the phrase "A shot in the arm"? — *Christine Zillius Mason, Scots Valley, California, USA*

WHY is it called the mission-ary position? — *Martin Klopfer, Taichung, Taiwan*

E-mail answers to weekly@guardian.co.uk; fax to (+44)171 242 0985, or post to the Guardian Weekly, 76 Farringdon Rd, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at <http://nq.guardian.co.uk/>

FEATURES 23

Letter from Japan Mark Harris

Cinderella complex

MASAKO wants a white wedding. "Wearing a white wedding dress is romantic and pretty," she says. "You feel like a princess for a day with all your friends watching you."

Masako has a classic case of what is known as *Shinderera con* (Cinderella complex) — many young Japanese women dream of having a fairytale wedding at a chapel, preferably officiated by a Western priest.

And so I become priest for the day. When Masako asked me to conduct the ceremony I told her that I am not religious. "Neither is anyone else but you will look better on the photos than the American priest the Garden Chapel Solel offered us," she reasoned.

And so I enter the cloth and deliver the nuptials. "Do you Kenichi Fujimoto take this woman Masako Kanazawa to be your lawful wedded wife?"

I look up at the groom through my age-fast spectacles, with my hands on the altar, holy as can be. High above, stained-glass windows set the fairytale scene as white doves fly over faraway castles and cascades fall into fertile valleys.

I wait nervously for Kenichi's confirmation in English. "I do."

I am told to emphasise the word "love" in my mock-sermon. "Love, trust, Love perseveres... Love is All You Need."

In the land where the wrapping is as important as the gift, Japan's long history of adapting imported ideas means that borrowing the Christian ceremony for the purpose of gift-wrapping marriage is not a problem for most Japanese. Style glosses over religion to the point that Westerners with no credentials other than being Westerners can become fake priests. One such man from the United States earns \$800 a day. He tells me: "It's good if you can get everyone to cry."

The hotel chapel where he works has imported an old church from England, complete with original stained glass, wooden beams and squeaking pews, and built it into the top of a high-rise wedding complex in downtown Osaka. The brochure invites you to "take a walk down the virgin road in a pure white dress".

Chapel weddings account for around 40 per cent of weddings in modern Japan. And as the planning of the wedding ceremony is the bride's domain, the choice of a chapel wedding can be seen to shift power just for a day, with the *Nana-*

yomesan (flower bride) being the focus of attention.

Considered romantic and relaxed, chapel ceremonies provide an alternative to traditional Japanese Shinto weddings — family affairs with no snikes, no kisses and, according to most young Japanese women, "no style". In such a ceremony the bride is harnessed into a heavy kimono, topped with a wig weighing about 2kg, and on top of that a *tsunokakushi* — a white hat that is said to hide women's jealousy horns.

"I pronounce you husband and wife," I said. Feeling reverent, I instruct Kenichi to kiss Masako. All the watery eyes in the Garden Chapel Solel gaze at the *hanayomesan*. Standing between huge displays of synthetic flowers and electric candles, the chorus sings "Memories" as the happy couple float down the "virgin road" for the confetti "flower-shower". Outside the chapel two inflatable love-loves are released into the sky over La Viena Wedding Complex Inc.

"Wedding factories" are popular because they efficiently herd families from the chapel and shrine, through the photo-studio, and on to the all-important reception — an ostentatious display of wealth originating from the traditional arranged marriages that consolidated business relations between families.

We travel this ceremonial conveyor-belt to the reception extravaganza. The lights drop and a synthesiser plays Abba's "Dancing Queen". A single spotlight falls on the happy couple as they head for the stage, which is flanked by a smoking plastic wedding cake.

By now defrocked, I mingle with a menage of the traditional and the modern: picking at raw squid and roast beef, family guests in kimono bearing ancestral crests sit with the "OLs" — the office ladies immaculate in velvet Versace suits and attachments of fake flowing hair.

The couple's bosses praise their employees' work-ethics and the screeching MC interviews the newlyweds about the happy day by radio-mike. "Flower bride, what dish can you cook best for the groom?" Still princess for the day, Masako smiles and says, "Instant noodles".

Everyone is delighted but the clock is about to strike midnight. Tearfully, Masako and Kenichi give flowers to their parents. The happy couple are going to honeymoon in Australia and must jump the Tokyo ship before it turns into a pumpkin.

A Country Diary

Meg Rooney

ALICE SPRINGS: The rocks of Ndhala Gorge tell many stories. As you walk along the river flat between sculptured red peaks, you can pick up chunks of sandstone that carry tales of the past.

There are the tracks of trilobites, which scuttled on the sandy bottom of a great inland sea here 500 million years ago. These spiny underwater beetles kicked up distinctive ridges of sand as they scoured in shallow water near the shore.

Rock surfaces pock-marked by parallel tubes tell of marine worms that dug vertical burrows on an ancient beach.

Ripple rock comes from waves washing back and forth on this beach. Patterns of mud cracks, filled with sand, tell of intertidal flats that swamped with water, then dried and cracked.

Another animal has also left its mark on the landscape. According to the Aborigines, caterpillars were one of the ancestral creatures that formed this gorge. Many of the large boulders are etched with their tracks, and there is evidence of the butterfly flies into which they grew. Where they entered the rock, the ancestral caterpillars left dots surrounded by circles. Single dots mark where they came out of the rock to continue their travels.

John Co. 1516

The hacker who turned himself in

David Sharrock in Jerusalem reports on the growing popularity of Israel's latest anti-hero

LAST month, some of the most secretive and sensitive establishments in the United States, including Nasa and the Pentagon, came under attack from an outside force. Entry was by that now familiar method, a computer linked to the Internet.

The lack of novelty was more than made up by the charge from the US undersecretary of defence, John Hammer, that the perpetrator was responsible for "the most systematic and organised attempt ever to penetrate the Pentagon's computer systems".

In terms of hysteria, the story got better by the minute. The computer hacker called himself "the Analyser" and was from the Middle East. Forty seven FBI agents, news agencies reported, were conducting an urgent worldwide search for the Analyser.

Too bad then that the quarry turned himself in, revealing his identity to an Internet magazine as a teenage Israeli boy looking forward to being called up for military service. That was last month. Since then Eliud Tenebaum has achieved star status in his native country, even as Washington presses for a trial.

With Tenebaum now under house arrest at home in the Tel Aviv commuter town of Hod Hasharon, and the Israeli parliament keen for him to address one of their committees, the questions are beginning to pile up. What drove Tenebaum to break cover and is he as dangerous as the US would have us believe?

Why then does nobody in Israel, from the prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, down, have a bad word for him?

Tenebaum approached Walla-News, an English-language Israeli Webzine, because two of his "pupils" in the US, with whom he corresponded by e-mail, had been arrested by the FBI in connection with hacking activities. Tenebaum had planted a list of his own passwords within the Pentagon's computer system and passed them on to his pupils "Makaveli" and "Too-short", residents of Cloverdale, in California.

According to Tenebaum, hacking into major computer systems in the US was an intellectual challenge. "I never destroy a thing on a server. It's only the challenge of breaking in. I know I'm going to retire soon and I haven't taught anyone what I know

In Israel no one, from Netanyahu down, has a bad word for him

about hacking. Makaveli didn't stop nagging me, he had a true desire to learn... I felt it was a waste to let all my knowledge go.

"I gave him some hacking tools. I've programmed and some access passwords to my servers. Makaveli probably didn't realise how serious this stuff can be. It's important that you realise that those two didn't break into any computer. They just tried to use my passwords list."

After the FBI raided the California homes of his Internet friends, Tenebaum hacked the home page of an FBI officer to tell the bureau that he was the only person they should be looking for.

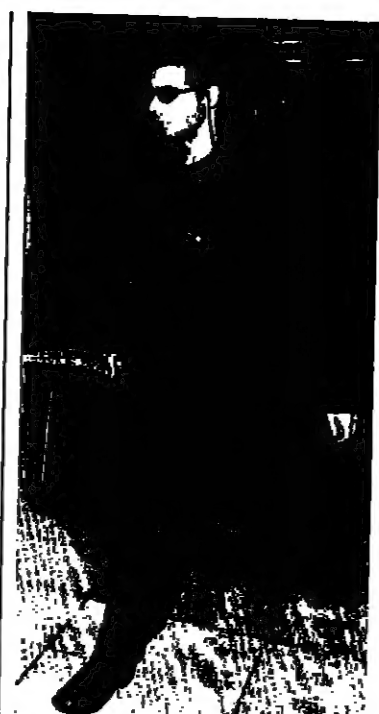
The Analyser met his Californian friends in a multinational group known as "the Enforcers", which hangs out in chat channels on the Web. The group's main activity is fighting racist and paedophile Web sites. The Enforcers have already threatened to cause "many problems" if their comrades are jailed. "None of us knows who the others are in real life," said Tenebaum.

The group also found a way into the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. The Analyser followed his usual routine, searching for security holes and blocking them. This practice is to "mark territory", preventing other hackers from gaining access. The only alterations they made were to the Knesset's home page and President Ezer Weizman's home page — the latter "because we love him", according to the Analyser. If he feels differently about Netanyahu and his wife, Sarah, he is saying nothing, but the Israeli first couple's Web site has been tampered with in recent weeks so that Net visitors are transferred to sites of pornographic images.

The Analyser said he was retiring "because I've had enough. I've had offers from abroad to 'cross the border' and be head of security in some servers. I would cross the border and work with the FBI, but I don't trust them. They'll sue me if they can."

The interview at a suburban McDonalds ended there, but Tenebaum's relationship with the FBI was just beginning. Within days of the interview appearing, 10 FBI investigators and officials were in Israel to "assist" police in their criminal inquiry. Two other Israelis, both aged 18, have also had their passports confiscated and continue to be questioned.

"This arrest should send a mes-



Tenebaum claims the attacks were an intellectual challenge

sage to would-be computer hackers all over the world that the United States will treat computer intrusions as serious crimes," said the US attorney general, Janet Reno. "We will work around the world and in the depths of cyberspace to investigate and prosecute those who attack computer networks."

If there is a whiff of witchhunt swirling around Washington, then in Israel Tenebaum's popularity seems to rise by the day. Netanyahu's first comment on the affair was that the Analyser was "damn good", before quickly adding that he could be "very dangerous too".

Tenebaum has acquired a media-friendly lawyer, Amnon

Zichroni, who is fighting a public campaign to keep sympathy flowing. "It appears to me to have brought benefit to the Pentagon. In essence he came and discovered the Pentagon's coding weakness," says Zichroni, adding sarcastically that the US authorities should maybe pay Tenebaum for his services.

Tenebaum is due to appear before the Knesset's committee on science and technology next week. Dalia Itzik, his chairwoman, has said that she thinks there is no criminal case to answer.

"From all the reports I'm hearing, this is a young man who did what he did not from criminal intent, but as a challenge. He didn't cause damage, but rather exposed flaws in terms of the protection of important computer information... his huge amount of knowledge should be used to help the state, but this is in accord with accepted rules and standards."

But in an abrupt change of attitude, Tenebaum stopped operating with detectives last month, apparently after learning that several US computer companies are considering filing civil suits against him.

Internet service provider Decks claims that it has spent hundreds of hours in repair work with officials at Western Michigan University have had to change 500 passwords. Net Decks's director Bill Zayan, was furious at Netanyahu's reaction to Tenebaum's activities. "This isn't a game or a joke, but rather a phenomenon which causes real damage. In my view, Analyser is a vandal, not a hero."

Zichroni may have the best explanation for a battle that seems so vast and important networks seem destined to lose. "In the past we used to boast about the girls we had. Nowadays kids boast about their ability to hack into computer systems."

Gentle warrior

Nino Konis Santana

WHEN I first met Nino Konis Santana, the commander of the East Timorese guerrilla movement Falintil, who has died aged 39, he told me of his worst moment. It was 1990 and he was in an eight-strong unit ambushed by the Indonesian army. Six of his unit were killed outright. He was shot in the neck, thigh and foot, and a fellow rebel was shot six times in the back. They crawled to safety in some bushes; he was naked but had a gun. The two men hid for a week, living on grass. Eventually, villagers discovered them, and nursed them back to health. His comrade was to die in a later battle.

Our meeting took place in 1994 in the East Timorese mountains. We talked solidly for 48 hours, first in a safe house and later in a forest clearing after a pre-dawn mountain march. Santana, charming and mercurial with bushy hair and a moustache, had reluctantly taken over as commander of Falintil a year earlier. He was the fifth holder of the post since the Indonesian invasion of the former Portuguese colony in 1975.

The first East Timorese leader, Nicolau Lobato, died in 1979. His three successors were all captured by the Indonesians and, at the time



Resist or die... Santana (circled) with guerrillas in East Timor

of Santana's succession, there was talk of the leadership passing outside the territory.

A member of the Fata-luko tribe, Santana was born near eastern Lautem in Lospalos. He received a Catholic education and qualified as a teacher's aide. In 1974, at the age of 18, he got involved in politics, and after the Indonesian occupation the following year he joined the guerrillas in the mountains, where he was to remain.

As for his death, the direct cause, his colleagues said, was a fall from an escarpment in heavy mist while returning from a patrol. But he had long suffered from untreated war wounds. He was said to be moving with difficulty because of gangrene from a bullet lodged in his thigh since 1990.

My most cherished memory of

him is of our breakfast in the forest. When the sun finally rose, villagers appeared as if from nowhere, bringing flasks of steaming coffee and freshly baked rolls. Another, uninvited, villager — somehow evading the look-outs — gaped with amazement to see a white woman picnicking with a heavily armed guerrilla group.

Santana sat down next to him and held his hand. He explained gently that they were of the resistance and that he must never speak of what he had seen. The interloper nodded solemnly and went on his way.

Jill Jolliffe

Nino Konis Santana, liberation fighter, born 1959; died March 11, 1998

Paradoxes of a democrat

E M Sankara Namboodiripad

THE ELECTION of E M Sankara Namboodiripad, who has died aged 88, as chief minister of Kerala in 1957 created a sensation. For his elevation made him head of the world's first democratically elected communist government.

The reality was a government following mainstream socialist policies, yet within two years India's president had dismissed it, arguing that "law and order" had broken down. The tactical error of E M S — as he was known — had been to take on two vested interests with his land and educational reform bills.

E M S was born into a Brahmin family in northern Kerala, then part of the Madras Presidency. The state was castigated at the time by Vivekananda, a saintly Hindu reformer, as a madhouse of caste. Travel by train "polluted" the higher castes, and as late as 1936 the lower castes threatened to convert en masse to Christianity if they were not allowed to walk past the temples. There was not merely untouchability but unseeability, with prescribed distances as to how near you could approach a Brahmin. E M S rejected this privileged existence, living humbly throughout his life — indeed he gave his share of the family estate to the Communist party.

He was the movement's most articulate thinker. During the

Communist Party of India's 1963-4 crisis between pro-China leftists and Moscow-leaning rightists, he was a centrist, and when a split became inevitable he aligned himself with the left but was denounced by China because he steered the breakaway Communist Party of India (Marxist) from the excesses of Maoism and of the China-backed ultra-left Naxalites.

He was Kerala's chief minister again in 1967-69 within a left progressive coalition. It did not work. Mired in the corruption of minor parties, conflict with the central government and quarrels between the rump CPI and the stronger CPI(M), the government passed, unremembered.

E M S was a paradox. Personally a democrat, he backed Stalin's actions in eastern Europe, and disapproved of Mikhail Gorbachev's attempts to reform the Soviet Union and of China's economic liberalisation.

Both admirers and critics believe that had he understood the reasons for China's economic reform, the pace of economic development in his home state of Kerala would have been quicker. In old age his mind became inflexible. None the less, E M S is one of the outstanding figures of 20th century Kerala.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters.

Tom Noskier

E M Sankara Namboodiripad, politician, born June 14, 1909; died March 19, 1998

Log on for a bumpy ride

Owen Bowcott

WHILE Captain John Hackett last week shrugged off a hero's welcome for saving a plane laden with Leeds United footballers, following a fire in the turbine seconds after take off at London's Stansted airport, colleagues were busy analysing his split-second decision making. Three times within recent months, British pilots have been praised for seizing the initiative and transforming potential air borne disasters into controlled crash landings.

Last August a British Region Airways flight from Manchester came down safely after its undercarriage jammed. Last November a Virgin airliner with similar problems skidded to a halt at Heathrow. The doom-laden phrase "pilot error" has been mercifully absent from the headlines.

While the airline industry, politicians and union officials fret over the dangers from increased traffic, one public website on the Internet provides an uncensored — and sometimes disconcerting — insight into life on today's instrument-burdened flight decks.

PFRuNe, otherwise known as the Professional Pilots' Rumour Network, may read like laddish cockpit-to-cockpit banter, with occasional references to which companies employ the sexiest female crew. But last week the online talk was all about the close call at Stansted airport. Resentment of uninformed

press coverage is rife among pilot contributors. Some journalists' only qualification for writing stories, one comment suggested, was a "liking for Airfix kits".

Other pilots were pondering whether they would have taken the same action in the circumstances. "There's no computer that can make these types of decisions for us," one correspondent admitted. "It comes down to skill and experience."

Scanning the site's pages, exchanges more often consist of pressing, personal issues — such as finding out which airline pays the highest wages. "Virgin is a wonderful airline to fly for," one anonymous pilot enthuses.

"Average work pattern (747) is four trips a month. As these flights are three to four days, we have a lot of time off... Icing on the cake is a superb garden party at Richard Branson's house every year. Everyone is friendly and almost all the girls are blonde!" Job-hopping among "Nigels", as pilots call themselves, is also a recurrent theme.

But it is the plaintive queries about air safety lodged on the PFRuNe website that jar most on the lay reader's desire for self-preservation en route to holidays or business meetings.

"Even those [African] countries that have reasonable Air Traffic Control are joining the slippery slope downhill," one pilot comments. "There was nearly a mid-air collision in Botswana. A north



bound plane was cleared to climb through the level of a south bound plane. The [authorities] are keeping quiet on this, however the controller was immediately suspended. The collision was only averted by a TCAS [Traffic Collision Avoidance System] warning in one aircraft."

Another correspondent worries about a recent near miss near Biggin Hill, in Kent: "It strikes me both sets of aircrew should have been aware of who was above and below in the [holding] stack and perhaps queried the ATC instructions when the higher aircraft was cleared to descend."

Nearly all contributors are unnamed. A reminder on its website declares: "This is an anonymous forum. The origins of the contributions may be opposite to what may be apparent."

Those who use PFRuNe, are

obviously not alone in worrying about future air safety. Projections show air traffic in Britain growing by 5 per cent a year. One serious accident a week in the world is "a very real possibility" in the future, Stuart Matthews, president of the Washington-based Flight Safety Foundation, an independent watchdog, claimed last month.

The greatest risks are in the "undeveloped world", particularly South America, Africa and large parts of Asia, he believes. Over the past 10 years, 70 per cent of all accidents have involved carriers who have accounted for only 16 per cent of the total air traffic.

The majority of these were from underdeveloped or Third World countries. We need to provide assistance to these areas. If we do not, the problems will become greater," Matthews said.

PFRuNe's role in providing a public forum for this safety debate is grudgingly accepted by professional bodies. The anonymity, it is accepted, allows staff to flag up warnings without fear of retribution from their employers.

The pilots' union, Bopa, insists it has "nothing to do" with PFRuNe. "Some of the pilots I have spoken to," a spokesman adds, "think the puerile stuff spoils it." But Jay Magee, of the Institute of Professional and Managerial Staff, which represents most of the UK's 2,500 air traffic controllers, says the website "shows the concern about the level of safety out there."

Equally worrying, Magee maintains, is pressure on "overworked" air traffic staff not to file "overload reports" when they believe they are handling too many aircraft in the sector. "Some of these reports are being derided and stopped. People are being told that they were not overloaded, they just couldn't handle the situation — so don't file."

Some pilots are aware that the website offers a highly coloured view of air safety and life in the cockpit. "We read so much of the downside of our profession," PFRuNe, one pilot notes. "It would be less damaging to our profession for [non-aviation] visitors to those pages to read that there are some of us who enjoy our job and do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay."

PFRuNe is on: <http://www.avnet.co.uk/ppru/index.html>

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GW 4/98

Computers have learnt to jam just like Charlie Parker. Well, almost. Steven Poole reports

Bird by mouse

CAN A computer swing? Sure it can, if you hang it up by a rope and kick it hard enough. No, man, what I'm saying is: can a digital cat play jazz? Jazz, the apotheosis of cool, the fiery crucible of 20th century musical authenticity, the spontaneous outpouring of one man or woman's artistic self-expression through the irreducibly physical medium of a sax, a trumpet, a piano, a double bass? That's one citadel of humanity, surely, that could never be stormed by the creeping hordes of artificial intelligence.

Never? Better think twice. Last month on BBC television jazz saxophonist Courtney Pine was jamming along on his soprano to the sounds of a computerised jazz quartet. Nothing unusual there: computers have been able to provide adequate, if stiff-backed, accompaniment to practising soloists for years. But then Pine stopped blowing — and another, invisible, saxophone continued to play with impressive fluidity and melodic interest across the harmonies, sounding weirdly like the late giant of the alto, Charlie Parker. Extraordinarily, this was the work of a computer program, Improvisor, and — crucially — the ghostly sax was not just playing a pre-determined line, but making it up as it went along in real time, just like a real jazz musician does.

The programmer responsible for summoning up this digital revenant is jazz musician Paul Hodgson, who is also a skilled computer programmer. His interest in the subject began in the eighties, when he was working as a music teacher, trying to teach children how to play jazz. He knocked up a program that, while playing the chords of a song, would analyse the harmony to work out and play a mode for the current stage of the tune (a "mode" is a kind of altered scale). His students could then listen and pick up the appropriate modes as they went along, to give them some basic building blocks for soloing.

In the meantime Hodgson began to wonder whether he could get the computer itself to generate an interesting solo. And that is where Char-



Parker... out soon on CD-Rom



Paul Hodgson jams with his creation, Improvisor. PHOTO: EMONNI MCCABE

lie Parker comes in. "I started analysing lots of Parker solos," Hodgson remembers, "trying to look for patterns and repetitive structures that he was using, and seeing if I could work out a way in which these solos could actually be put together. I abstracted out sets of variable-length patterns from different solos, and then I started working out ways of applying these patterns to different tunes, to create new solos. And that's basically what you hear."

In jazz the term "pattern" can denote a group of notes that a musician learns to play at speed in numerous keys until it can be instantly recalled during a solo — the notes fall naturally under the fingers, leaving the brain free to figure out what to play next. Some musicians don't do any more than this. An unimpressed (or envious) jazzier might damn a colleague with the gravely expletive "patternner".

In this way the method of the program Improvisor is close to the way a mediocre musician operates. But does the fact that Parker's style can be imitated by a computer mean that the great Bird was a mere patternner? Of course not. "It doesn't actually tell you how the patterns were created in the first place," Hodgson observes. "Parker might use similar patterns, but he modifies and sculpts them to the context of the music that he's playing."

That said, Hodgson has found to his surprise that the computer comes up with phrases that he has never heard Bird use. "It's actually creating new stuff — and some of it is bloody good. This raises the question of whether Bird's style could evolve further in cyberspace."

Hodgson has concluded that one aspect of creativity is the way an artist chooses patterns and puts them together. "It applies to painting as well. You've only got to look at 20th century art and abstract painting to see that there are lots of common patterns that artists are using."

However, the reason top players are popular is not just the notes they play, but the distinct characteristics of the sound they make. If you add to Hodgson's melodic calculations something to account for this idiosyncratic control of timbre in

real time, the computation becomes forbiddingly complex. And, of course, any real jazz musician is always listening to what everyone else in the band is doing — which Improvisor doesn't do. There'll be no silicon stars of free jazz for a good while — if ever.

Courtney Pine's own verdict on the computer program was interestingly mixed. On the first take, which the BBC didn't show because of the pungent language, Pine said it was "bloody brilliant". But as for replacing humans — well, no cigar yet. "You can't replace the human experience, the human feel," Pine smiled. "What's missing, I suppose, is some of the soul, some of the spirit."

HODGSON'S own researches have brought him to the conclusion that the idea of a top-flight artificial musician is an oxymoron: "To create music you have to be alive in the world. It's not possible." What he is now looking at instead are ways to use his system to create new musical interfaces — for disabled children, and for artists working in other media. Computerised image-tracking could provide an instantaneous soundtrack for a ballet, or future disco venues could alter a record's sound with flailing limbs.

In a way his work has pleasingly come full circle: from trying to replicate human creativity electronically, to producing an electronic tool that can be used to enhance human creativity. This will be a relief to people who prefer to snap their fingers at a real, groovy-shirted person on stage, rather than nod their heads at an offensively beige lump of extruded plastic.

And Hodgson sounds a note of warning: "Maybe there's an in-principle limit to what we can do. It's our quest to eat from the Tree of Knowledge and be completely knowledgeable about everything in the world — and in so doing, what we could easily do is destroy it, by building things that don't have any spiritual consciousness and become out of our control." With that unpalatable scenario ringing in our ears, perhaps it's best to go back to the old records again. After all, a computer might study ornithology, but it'll never know how it feels to fly.

Radio active

CD REVIEWS
Tim Ashley

NAXOS deserve an award. Using archive material supplied by the Canadian-based Immortal Performances of Recorded Music Society, they've secured the commercial release of operatic radio broadcasts, taken from live performances from 1937-1943, some of them hitherto only available as expensive bootlegs.

Not everyone will like them: recording techniques weren't ideal then, although the sound is always acceptable and in some instances astonishingly good. Critical editions weren't in vogue in those days either, so if you blanch at the idea of cuts, think twice. If you're any sense, however, you'll buy at least four and preferably six of the seven, because — with one exception — they contain some of the greatest performances in music history.

The exception is Strauss's *Night in Venice*, from Berlin in 1938. Marcel Witsch is an elegant Caranellio and Carli Spletter is aristocratic as Anna. But the conducting is staid and the dialogue goes on forever. You can either cope with Third Reich recordings or you can't. Here, the quality of the performance doesn't justify its release.

The rest, however, are very different. They derive from the famous Saturday matinee Met broadcasts at a time when the company — made up of America's best singers and exiled legends who had fled from Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin — was at its peak. Operatic tradition, under attack in Europe, was fiercely defended on the other side of the Atlantic. The artists' commitment is breathtaking and you get an electric excitement that no studio recording could generate. This is what music, and opera in particular, is all about.

The urgency of contemporary political events clearly turned a potentially good performance of La Fille Du Regiment, in the winter of 1940. Into a great one. France had fallen, and when Lily Pons, as the regimental mascot Marie, launches into her barnstorming final aria, the audience goes berserk. The much criticised Pons was a wonderful comedienne, and coloratura has rarely been as stunning as it is here.

Met profits... the Naxos collection

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Salvatore Baccaloni is a hilarious dirty old man as Sergeant Sulpice. Raoul Jobin is a toughing Tonio, while Ira Pettina's Marquise de Birkenfeld sounds like Lady Bracknell on speed.

The Tales Of Hoffman is no notable for Lawrence Tibbett, the century's greatest baritone, definitive as the four manifestations of Hoffmann's demonic alter-ego. René Mason, as Hoffmann, gets the character's unnerving ambiguity absolutely right. Vina Hovv sharply differentiates the four female stereotypes — automaton, whore, victimised wife and camp diva that haunt his imagination.

There's a wonderful conducting too, from Maurice Abraham. Bruno Walter's 1942 Don Giovanni, the stuff of legend, is never bettered. Walter catches every emotional flicker and moral nuance of Mozart's multi-faceted score. The Met's two great rival basses, Eric Pinza and Alexander Kipnis, make the best Giovanni and Leporello imaginable. Rose Hampton's blazing Anna is a woman on the edge of a nervous breakdown. Jarmila Novotna's Elvira is fiery and vulnerable. An unmissable reissue.

Erich Leinsdorf's reputation as a variable Wagnerian derives from his rather stolid studio recordings. Live, it was a different story: his Tristan is wonderfully paced. Lauritz Melchior, the best tenor you will ever hear in Wagner. Helen Traubel, the Met's rival to the legendary Kirsten Flagstad's Isolde, is all right and passion, fusing one top C, otherwise steady as a rock.

The Faust and Alceste, though not in the same league, are worth having. Gluck's masterpiece finds Bampton paired with Malmgren. Although she apparently took over the performance at short notice, she's wonderfully vivid. Malmgren is in beautiful voice and Ettore Panizza conducts perfectly.

Gounod's war-horse is a two-man show with Pinza fabulously Mephistopheles, and the young Leonard Warren an excellent Valentin. Pelletier drives it too hard though, and Richard Crooks's Faust is passionless. Helen Jepson is weak as Marguerite, though the audience goes wild for her. The excitement that she was capable of generating she didn't, it seems, transfer to disc.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
April 12 1998

Holding a mirror up to desolation

THEATRE
Michael Billington

IHAVE measured out my life in Uncle Vanya: indeed two particular productions, by Laurence Olivier and Peter Stein, will haunt me to my grave. But even if Katie Mitchell's RSC/Young Vic co-production is not quite on the same exalted plane, it is still a treasurable occasion likely to penetrate the memory for days afterwards.

David Lan, in the published Introduction to his new version, makes a subtle point that whereas The Seagull belongs to the 19th century theatre, in Uncle Vanya Chekhov was writing the first modern play. That strikes me as profoundly true, in that atmosphere prevails over incident. By the end all that has really happened is that Vanya and his niece, Sonya, have come face to face with the waste and desolation of their infinitely sad lives.

In Uncle Vanya, Chekhov discards melodrama; yet how beautifully he orchestrates the

quotidian realities of life. And the great thing about Mitchell's production is that it combines minute attention to detail with rigorous sense of form. She also has the confidence never to raise her voice: she allows us to eavesdrop, as it were, on intimate conversations to often devastating effect. Only in the moment where Vanya tries to shoot the Professor does the production miss Chekhov's tragicomic momentum.

This is a rich, detailed production blessed by some excellent performances. Stephen Dillane's Vanya is an angry obsessive who sees everywhere a mockery of his own wasted potential. Anastasia Hille's Yelena likewise seems torn apart by her awareness of her own futility. Like all the best Sonyas, Jo McNees makes you feel that Astrov, in rejecting her, is ruining his own chance of happiness and Linus Roache makes Astrov himself a quietly sensitive man alert to the destructiveness of idleness. But perhaps the real quality of the production lies in the fact that you emerge feeling you have seen less a piece of drama than

a mirror held up, with heartrending accuracy, to nature itself.

Like all Irish writers, Brian Friel is obsessed by exile and homecoming. But his latest, very Chekhovian, play, Give Me Your Answer Do at London's Hampstead theatre is specifically about the writer's sense of exile from self; and it goes on to suggest, with haunting poignancy, that most of us stagger through life adopting masks to disguise our inner uncertainty.

That makes the play sound abstract. In fact it is rivetingly specific. The setting is Ballybeg in County Donegal. And the dilemma facing the hero — a blocked, hard-up novelist called Tom Connolly — is direct: should he sell his manuscripts to a rich Texan university, assuming they make a handsome offer, or should he persist in his life of obstinate, draining penury?

But that is only the peg for an exploration of the insecurity felt most acutely by the writer but common to all humanity. As played with absolute conviction by Niall Buggy, Connolly is an awkward, shambling

figure ill at ease in company and only truly himself when weaving fantasies to amuse his mute, institutionalised daughter. But as his wife says of writers: "You're unhappy in the world you inhabit and you're more unhappy in the fictional world you create; so you drift through life like exiles from both places."

This is much more, however, than an incestuous play about the plight of the writer: with non-judgmental compassion, Friel implies that we most of us lead lives of quiet desperation. For all this, the play is very funny. The sight of two writers, joined at the hip by fraternal insecurity and a sense of mutual envy, has a hilarious accuracy: even the casual cruelties people inflict on one arouse bilious laughter. But in the end the play moves on by Friel's insistence that we all play roles to camouflage our uncertainty: the only difference with writers is that they are more likely to reveal the face behind the mask.

Robin Lefevre's production is beautifully alert to the play's tragicomic mood. Friel is back on top form, writing about life's disappointments with a wrenching honesty and understanding.

Prozac for the human soul

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

OKTOBER (ITV) is one of those paranoid thrillers where the hero does a lot of running because Absolutely Everyone is Out To Get Him. Jim Harper (Stephen Tompkinson), who is besotted by Rochelle, a pharmaceutical heiress, gatecrashes a top-secret conference on a Swiss mountain-top to see her.

You do feel that this is the action of a much slier man than Tompkinson. Which may be why he is sporting a mop of uncustomed curls, giving him a tousled air.

Rochelle, who is as warm and womanly as the north face of the Eiger, is enticing her troops with news of the company's new wonder drug. "It'll bring in \$3,000,000,000 per year. It is a gift from God. No mind-altering drug has ever gone as deep as this one. Its potential is limitless. Prozac for the human soul." The only problem was that it put you in a coma.

(Rochelle and her huge Swiss drug company are, of course, no relation to Roche, the huge Swiss drug company. Though in her place I'd be changing my name to Doris by deed poll before a jumbo jet full of lawyers landed.)

The drug's most striking quality is that it taps the subconscious. Those who take it find they are in telepathic contact. They sense each other's pain and communicate in dreams, like wolves howling across the wilderness. There is a good deal of talk about the collective unconscious but it will only give you a headache. (Try an aspirin.)

Jim is killed in the first reel, which would make this a very brief thriller indeed if Rochelle hadn't revived him ("I'll go in through the nipple") with a shot of wonder drug.

He is now a lab animal and, as such, his value is staggeringly enhanced. "\$50,000,000 on legs!" So he gets it.

When Jim's doctor offers him the use of his seaside home, he doesn't think that odd. I am on perfectly affable terms with my doctor. Not once has the bastard offered me the use of his seaside home. Jim also trusts Rochelle, Linda and a gaggle of young people he meets in a pub, who offer the warmest camaraderie on the prelate acquaintance. Every last one is in on it.

It's a good-looking thriller that nips along nicely. But will whoever it is that keeps saying "Oh, don't be so silly!" please shut up? Oh, it's me.

The meandering and charming *Lion Country* (BBC1) is half way home. Lord Bath, however, is not. He is in St Tropez with his multi-coloured kaftan. He is vivid proof how much dapper life would be without the happy happenstance of the hereditary system. As was once said approvingly about the Order of the Bath, "There's no damn merit about it. You never know what's going to pop up next out of the bath." In this case it's a rather endearing old duck.

A taste of honey

CINEMA
Richard Williams

ULYSSES JACKSON, a taciturn grandfather who keeps bees in the swamps of the Florida panhandle, the writer and director Victor Nunez has created one of the finest movie roles of the decade. And in Peter Fonda he has found the ideal actor. Ulee's Gold is a film of many admirable parts, but in the end it is about one role and one performance.

The art that Fonda brings to Ulee's Gold is something only cinema can reveal. How crazy, then, that this year's Academy Award should have gone instead to Jack Nicholson, his old colleague. What Nicholson does in As Good As It Gets is the kind of acting, all gesture and grimace, that you can see any night in the theatre. Fonda, by contrast, deploys the screen actor's skill of creating the illusion of intimacy through restraint.

Cinema also offers the potential for a productive interaction between the fictional character and the actor's public identity. In Fonda's case the impact of his performance. In Ulee's Gold is reinforced by the anonymity of his recent career. As we watch the film, we find ourselves wondering about him, about where he's been and what he's done. And in one very specific way, our speculation nourishes our understanding of Ulee Jackson.

A Vietnam veteran, Ulee scrapes a living by harvesting honey from bees fed on the pollen of tupelo gum trees, a skill handed down through three generations. "The bees and I have an understanding," he tells a new neighbour, Connie (Patricia Richardson). "I take care of them, and they take care of me."

No one else does. A failed bank robbery has put his son, Jimmy, in jail. Jimmy's wife, Helen, is running wild in another town. In their absence, Ulee is looking after his two school-age granddaughters, Casey and Penny.



All stillness and suppressed anguish... Peter Fonda in Victor Nunez's Ulee's Gold

As he deflects Connie's offers of assistance, we realise that this is a man so committed to self-sufficiency that he has hermetically sealed himself. But a telephone call summoning him to rescue Helen and a trap set by Jimmy's former accomplices propel him into a new relationship with the world.

Nunez sketches in the Vietnam background with a light touch, but we are left in no doubt that the war shaped Ulee's adult life, fracturing his sense of continuity. And here is where the echoes of Fonda's personal history resonate inside the role. We associate him with the anti-establishment mood of the late sixties, and so an ironic counterpoint plays in our minds alongside the film's narrative.

All stillness and suppressed anguish, Fonda turns Ulysse Jackson into a role that Clint Eastwood might have killed to play, and there are outstanding subsidiary performances from Christine Dunford as Helen, Jessica Biel (Casey) and Vanessa Zima (Penny). The scenes following Helen's return, when the girls look on as Ulee and Connie subject their mother to an informal detoxification, are authentically harrowing.

Its spare, piercingly accurate dialogue makes Ulee's Gold feel like the screenplay Raymond Carver might have written. "Now me, I'm divorced," Connie tells Ulee. "Twice, actually. No kids, fortunately." A pause. "I guess fortunately." Only the ending, although dramatically justified, comes as a mild disappointment.

The trouble with bringing a book like Oscar and Lucinda to the screen is the unlikelihood of avoiding offence to the very people responsible for its success. Those readers whose imaginations were fired by Peter Carey's magical story of the strange liaison between a damaged young English parson and a spirited young Australian factory owner in the late 19th century will inevitably be the first to take offence at the tampering with their dreams.

In terms of sensitivity and fidelity, the 1988 Booker Prize-winner could hardly ask for a more devoted servant than Gillian Armstrong, a long-term friend of the author. Armstrong and her scriptwriter, Laura Jones, have probably done everything they could to preserve the particular mood of this complicated, daring and literary novel.

With straw-like hair and a petrified smile, Ralph Fiennes certainly satisfies Carey's description of the vulnerable, aquaphobic Oscar Hopkins: "He was light, airy, made from the quills of a bird... The eyes were so clean and unprotected, like freshly peeled fruit."

Cate Blanchett, lean and swift, the unorthodoxy of her upbringing reflected in a series of frock-and-trouser combinations, makes a similarly decent fist of Lucinda, and both she and Fiennes work hard to create a convincing relationship between the two, which begins with card sessions on board ship from England to Australia and is sustained when they reach her homeland, only to be ruptured by a tragic misapprehension.

While there is no way of translating Carey's incantatory rhythms to a screenplay, his climactic sequence might have been made for celluloid, and the result is undeniably spectacular. Armstrong sets a glass church afloat on the Bellinger river, Lucinda's gift to the exiled Rev Dennis Hassett (Ciaran Hinds). The vision of this beautiful structure gliding between the river's wooded banks will strike, even those who find the pace of the film pedestrian and its tone too whimsical.

Keeping it in the family

Sue Arnold

Strangers: A Family Romance
by Emma Tennant
Jonathan Cape 183pp £12.99

DROP a name and watch me race to catch it. I'm a sucker for famous names, with one proviso — they have to be dead for only then can they be truly romantic. I'm also a sucker for romance. Given these proclivities how could I fail to relish *Strangers: A Family Romance* by Emma Tennant, a part fictional, part biographical account of her rich, privileged, titled, profitable and pretty much hopeless family?

The Tennants were never Premier League toffs — nowhere near as grand as the Devonshires (Emma's grandfather was the first Baron Glenconner), as clever as the Howards or as eccentric as the Redes. Tragic is the usual tabloid description of the family when yet

another member gets disinherited, dies of Aids or falls out with Princess Margaret. I'd just call them sad.

So why their fascination? We're back to those famous names. The Tennants collected them; if they had a single talent, it was for surrounding themselves with, better still marrying, famous people. Emma's great aunt Margot married H H Asquith and served quails' eggs, consommé and crown roast to Winston Churchill and Rupert Brooke at No 10.

Her married aunt Clare had an affair with Lionel Tennyson, grandson of the poet, who went on to captain the English cricket team. When the prime minister wrote him an admonishing letter, the young blunderer replied: "Dear Mr Asquith, you are an interfering old bugger [sic]. Shades of Bonnie Prince Charlie's rebuffs. Why are upper-class chaps such illiterate twits?"

Lord Alfred Douglas was grandmother Pamela's first cousin. Emma's half-brother Colin invited

Princess Margaret to stay at the family home, Glen, the freezing mock-Gothic castle at Traquair in the Scottish Borders where the homemade electricity failed every night and the grounds were full of Daily Express reporters hoping for a royal engagement scoop. Nothing changes.

The book is divided into two parts. The first, pre-first world war to 1941, is seen through the eyes of Louisa, the family's 17-year-old housemaid in love all her life with Bim, the Glenconner heir killed on the Somme. Bim was probably the nicest of all the Tennants. At 17 he would quote from the Iliad "with modesty and finesse". The second part is told by the author herself.

One of Emma Tennant's skills as a novelist is her visual acuity. Louisa's section is full of details of shooting parties and picnics, and brides with gossip — Asquith was apparently infatuated with Venetia Stanley, one of his daughter's

friends, and wrote intimate notes to her every day — but it reads disconcertingly like a gazetteer. If Helliol had been around in 1912 it would have read like this. Everyone is wealthy, clever, well-connected and glamorous. Well, maybe not Margot Asquith who looks like Mr Punch. But somehow they're not real. They have no hearts. Only when Emma takes over do they come to life.

Twelve-year-old Emma discovers a secret cupboard in the Walnut Room at Glen, opens it and out pours "an avalanche of the frozen tears of my grandmother and her world". Up till then, the portraits of women with grumpy Queen Victoria faces and men like stiff cut-outs had been strangers.

"I learnt that the sole cause of their unhappiness, which in my family was to assume the proportions of Greek tragedy, could be discovered again and again in the loss and thwarting of love, patterns and repetitions as densely interwoven as the birds and leaves of Pamela's grandmother's William Morris designs."

Exactly whose love was thwarted

when Colin Tennant failed to propose to Princess Margaret had clear. A generation earlier, according to one of the Glen house guests, Colin's father Christopher was invited to Glamis and faked proposing to Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. He fled to Venice instead and had an affair with John Barrymore's wife.

Strangers is full of these fascinating snippets, but like an Oriental banquet stuffed with tasty morsels, it leaves you hungry for more. What, for instance, came of Barry Cust, her grandmother's only real love, he of the beautiful fingers? What exactly was the relationship between Asquith and Venetia Stanley and, most tantalising of all, what was the burning secret Emma's nephew whispered in her ear before he died of Aids? If Tennant had chosen to write *Strangers* as pure fiction, it might have been up there with *The Pursuit of Love*. As it stands, it leaves you vaguely dissatisfied, which may be of course precisely what she planned. The queen of sequels has shown us the goose — the golden eggs, kids of them, are probably on their way.

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April 12 1996

Paperbacks

Nicholas Lazard

England Is Mine, by Michael Powell (Fleming, £7.99)

RISKY enterprise, trying to achieve a synthesis of English literature which includes Oscar Wilde, *State of Mind* and *Death*, Lindy Anderson, Evelyn Waugh, The Redcliffe Hall, Wyndham Lewis, Rosamond Lehmann and the Smiths, the book's subtitle is *Life in Albion from Wilde to the 1990s*, which signals an anxious, deranged hipness, and says us that we may be about to read an act rather than a critique of the (not British) navel-gazing.

But *England Is Mine* succeeds. The joy of the book comes from putting itself in his hands as he embarks on his strange, circuitous odyssey, a jump from the orbits of high culture without breaking the surface of a false note. He has a sense of humour, and his expert, reliable thumb-flicks along the way; The *Group* were "young men deeply

seduced in a psycho-melodrama, whom torture and oppression made the pop thematic equivalent of blondes and little red notes". A few omissions, but it's a great way of understanding English.

Man Antigone, by John Berger (Vintage, £8.99)

PROSE of us who are dismayed by the ease and swiftness with which Tony Blair and his cronies have taken the Thatcherite line will find comfort in this book, albeit a rather *proppé* comfort (it means "silly"). Tony, but you probably

know that already). For even if you really thought that the world was a very messy and disastrous one, this will give you some nasty moments. *Antigone* is the master of the crushing juxtaposition. The pious handling of Dunblane looks a little less holy when placed next to the Government's continuing sale of arms and aircraft to the murderers of East Timor; Britain's

glorious denunciation of "terrorism" sits uneasily next to her treatment of the indigenous population of Diego Garcia, which involved sending them all off the island and putting them into a US military base. There's plenty more to be getting on with here. Burma, East Timor, Kosovo and China: the sheer scale of the inhumanity of injustice around the world is shocking, revolting, and so much fun to read — not least because our acquiescence in the commission of events we get to hear pages on the culpable. But every-
body should read this, and if it discomforts the cretins, charlatans and political betrayers who run the whole damn show, so much the better.

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On best behaviour

Lewis Wolpert

The Social Animal
by W G Runciman
HarperCollins 144pp £14.99

FOR Runciman this is a particularly exciting time to be engaged in sociological research, and he has given us a valuable introduction for non-specialists; but considering how critical he is of some of his professional colleagues, they too would benefit from reading it. Sociology refers to the study of human behaviour in relation to social life in which humans attach meaning to their relationships, and tries to understand various human groups and institutions, both present and past.

Runciman is committed, though he rarely applies it, to a Darwinian evolutionary approach — descent with modification — in which one thinks of cultures or societies having their probability of replication enhanced. This attempt to identify replicators and selection in social processes has a strong Procrustean feel, forcing his ideas to fit the Darwinian bed he has made for them.

A key feature of Darwinian theory is selection, and even if an analogy can be drawn between the information content of culture and genes, I still cannot see what the selection process is. Society involves complex interactions, and it is these dynamic processes that need to be understood. An example of this approach is provided by his discussion of the so-called Matthew Effect, that the winner takes all. The sudden escalation of the financial rewards for top executives, sports stars and writers in the United States is accounted for in terms of the changes in the environment, such as an increase in the consumer market.

Sociologists and anthropologists have a problem when they come to studying an alien culture. The case of Margaret Mead being grossly misled by the Samoans is well known. But it is possible to identify with the habits of a different culture and Evans Pritchard, when he lived with the Azande, managed to regulate his affairs in accordance with the oracle's decisions and always kept a supply of poison handy. But this descriptive exercise is different from the formulation of explanatory hypotheses of such behaviour.

While he retains a vision of sociology as an exciting mystery story there is a pessimistic conclusion that what "sociology teaches is how little it can do, or ever will, to predict how the patterns of roles, communities of human groups, communities, institutions and societies are actually going to evolve". But since there are so many who believe that they both know how society works and how best to change it, this book deserves to be very widely studied.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £11.99 contact CultureShop (see page 29)

There's a boy in my soup

Ian Sansom

About A Boy
by Nick Hornby
Gollancz 286pp £15.99

THERE are basically two kinds of soup. There's the kind like stew: messy, chewy, full of disintegrating carrot and potato, with stringy little bits of chicken and bone, and slivers of onion and parsnip. And then there's the stuff that's been left to stand, allowed to cool and settle, had all its scum skimmed off, and then had a quick whisk through a blender: smooth, consistent, soup without lumps and a good matt finish. Nick Hornby's books are more like the second type of soup: they're a kind of literary puree.

It's almost as if Hornby's prose has been drained through a sieve: all the substance, all the verbiage, all the usual tedious fatty stuff that you get in novels has been rubbed through until the whole is easily digestible. Which is presumably why people like it: reading his books is like eating Heinz Tomato Soup; it's comfort food. Good ordinary popular English literature, like good old-fashioned British food, probably never went away, but now it's fashionable again, and Hornby is head chef.

About A Boy, like *Fever Pitch* and *High Fidelity* before it, is filling and perfectly tasty, though still lacking in some indefinable quality, some seasoning that would add complexity to the taste. It's essentially a coming-of-age novel, in which not one but two people get to come of age: one of them, Will Freeman, is in his 30s; the other, Marcus, is a 12-year-old, on the cusp of adolescence.

Marcus and his mum have recently moved to London, and it's taking him a while to learn how to fit in with the other children at his new school. Will is a waster who spends his time trying to pick up needy thirtysomething single mothers. He eventually finds a purpose to his sad life in his friendship with Marcus and in his relationship with a new girlfriend, Rachel. During the course of the book everybody grows up and grows



Nick Hornby: a dumbed-down Iris Murdoch

PHOTO: CHRIS SAUNDERS

wisely. Even Fiona, Marcus's suicidal mum, cheers up a bit by the end.

Hornby says as much, and in so many words: "All three of them had had to lose things in order to gain other things. Will had lost his shell and his cool and his distance, and he felt scared and vulnerable, but he got to be with Rachel; and Fiona had lost a big chunk of Marcus, and she got to stay away from the casualty ward; and Marcus had lost himself, and got to walk home from school with his shoes on." And that's about the measure of it, in terms of both style and substance.

As a straightforward book about emotional survival, with a few strong central characters and a few laughs, *About A Boy* reads very much like a book for "young adults". The snappy, droll dialogue, the set-pieces at parties, the detailing of the dilemmas of post-pubescent (namely, the big questions about sex, death and the meaning of life), the chronicling of confused individuals' wild hopes and disappointments, and the constant reminder that somehow life must go on even though we don't quite know why, mean that *About A Boy* merits comparison with the Holden Caulfield-haunted American teen-fiction of the late 1960s and 1970s. It's that good.

Except of course that Hornby stays tethered to his familiar north London territory, and stays faithful

to his music and his football. He sticks to the tried-and-tested creative writing formula, and writes about what he knows: which is a three or four kilometre radius around Highbury and Islington, and the history of pop, from the first Clash album onwards (the title, presumably, is a nod to Nirvana's "About a Girl"; the death of Kurt Cobain features heavily as a plot device).

The usual ingredients are bound together with an emulsifying agent of vague, sub-philosophical musing, and the overall tone is instructive: observe and do otherwise. Hornby is in fact beginning to sound increasingly like a dumbed-down Iris Murdoch: the books repeat again and again the same convoluted emotional relationships and re-heat the same strained philosophy.

Taken — swallowed — as a whole it's a real broth of a book, and if you enjoyed the last two you won't mind another helping. Mrs Beeton, for one, would have approved: "The valuable dietetic properties of soup have been, and indeed still are, much overlooked... no form of food is more digestible... nor does any other method of preparing food afford so many opportunities for utilising material that would otherwise be wasted."

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £11.99 contact CultureShop (see page 29)

The man who fell to earth

Tim Radford

Starman: The Truth Behind the Legend of Yuri Gagarin
by Jamie Doran and Piers Bizony
Bloomsbury 248pp £17.99



Space oddity... Gagarin's fame brought him to earth with a hump

SPACEMEN are often young, invariably upwardly mobile and always professional. Luck put them quite literally at the sharp end, and they would have gone nowhere without the huge thrust of intellect and effort below them. But they all had vaulting ambition. The road to heaven is paved with more than just good intentions.

On the morning of April 12, 1961, no one had heard of Yuri Gagarin. By noon of that day he was the most famous man in the world. At 9.06 Moscow time, he accelerated away from the Baikonur space station strapped into a Vostok spacecraft poised on top of an R-7 rocket and at 10.55 Moscow time, after not quite one complete revolution of the planet at 28,000 kilometres an hour, he tumbled out of the sky near a village called Smelkivka in the Saratov region to be greeted by an astonished woman, a child and a dappled calf. "Can it be that you have come from outer space?" the woman asked him. "As a matter of fact, I have," said the first cosmonaut.

Gagarin had a grin that lit up the darkness of the cold war and a natural grace that made him one of the best ambassadors the USSR ever had. The Soviet prime minister, Nikita Khrushchev, liked him; a simple lad of peasant origins who came up the hard way. The title

promises the truth: what the text demonstrates is how hard it is to get Soviet heroes in focus.

There is testimony from Gagarin's brother and sister, and from fellow cosmonauts such as Gherman Titov, the second man in orbit, and the observations, letters and memoirs of people within and outside the space business. They confirm some things that were never in any doubt. Gagarin was a first-class pilot and a hardworking student, he was in terrific physical condition and he was psychologically about as steady as a man could get. But it took all of that to be se-

lected either for the Russian or the American space programme. Afterwards he found his fame a strain: who wouldn't?

In 1942, when he was eight, the Germans occupied his home village. More than 20 million Russians died at the hands of the Nazis. All the Gagarins survived. Yuri is remembered as "going down into the cellar to find bread, potatoes, milk and vegetables, and distributing them to refugees from other districts". He is remembered as secretly sabotaging German tank batteries, and shoving potatoes into the exhausts of Nazi military cars.

Old dog learns new tricks

Julia Eccleshare on the winner of the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize

THE four shortlisted books for this year's Guardian Children's Fiction Prize represent the quality and breadth of contemporary children's publishing. The judges were looking for a novel for seven-year-olds and upwards that would entertain and excite readers for years to come.

In Jane Stemp's *Secret Songs* (Hodder) they found a book that showed enormous insight in dealing with the world of the deaf heroine; in *The Track Of The Wind* (Mammoth) they relished Jamila Gavin's handling of the complexities of the partition of India; they were delighted by the good humour and pace of J K Rowling's *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone* (Bloomsbury); but the striking and original voice of Henrietta Branford's *Fire, Bed And Bone* (Walker Books) carried the day unanimously.

A story told through the eyes of an old hunting dog could have all kinds of problems. So could the historical setting of the *Peasants' Revolt*. But Branford's vibrant and polished writing transcends both efforts easily.

Starting with the last whelping of the old dog who wants nothing more than the fire, bed and bone of the title, Branford tackles the major issues of birth, death and the separations between mother and child — human and animal — with a direct honesty that avoids both the mawkish and the

sentimental. On the contrary, the emotions that most strongly fuel the book are courage and the need to fight for freedom.

Branford is a passionate believer in both. "I value courage," she says. "If I were a fairy godmother I would give children courage. You can't promise children safety, but you can give them the courage to help them survive. I don't like pretending that the world is a safe place or that we can keep our children safe. You cannot predict what will happen but you can say, 'Be brave'."

Likened by one of the judges to E B White's *Charlotte's Web*, with mothers at once protecting and abandoning their young, this is a story about growing and parting. Rufus and Comfort, the human couple in the story, are taken from their children for their part in the peasants' uprising against the combined power of their landlords and the Church. Rufus is hanged. The dogs, too, are unable to protect their young from both animal and human predators. Telling the story through the old dog's eyes gives Branford the opportunity to describe the countryside with a sharpness that is a vital ingredient of the book.

"I was brought up on the edge of the New Forest," she says. "What my father taught me about animals comes through. It took a long time to get the dog's voice — it started out as a pig — but once I had it, the story of the *Peasants' Revolt* followed quite easily." It is that voice which shapes the book.

Dream machine

Sylvia Brownrigg

Martin Dressler: The Tale of an American Dreamer
by Steven Millhauser
Phoenix House 293pp £12.99

THE setting of Steven Millhauser's glittering new novel is New York at the turn of the century, when "the city was a fever-patient in a hospital, thrashing in its sleep, erupting in modern dreams". With bright and quivering energy Millhauser brings the city to life at its quintessentially American stage — yearning, striving, climbing, hungry: busy with those virtues that may also be perils, when dreams grow so great they eventually collapse under the weight of their own ambition.

Martin Dressler is, as the subtitle suggests, a moral tale "of an American dreamer". In it Martin, son of a German cigar store owner, makes a dramatic series of moves, from hotel bellboy to clerk, from manager of a chain of lunchrooms to manager and builder of ever more fabulous hotels. In winning last year's Pulitzer Prize, Martin Dressler threw a belated light on Millhauser, whose smart, magical fictions are often both meticulously historical and also subject to wild, Calvino-like flights into the land of the dream.

Millhauser is drawn to dreamers. In Martin Dressler it is Martin's dream-like achievement, a hotel called the Grand Cosmo, that proves his undoing and carries him off.

But on the way to Martin's final folly, Millhauser lingers over the busy, real world — in almost overwhelming detail. He is irrepressible in his description of chair fabrics,

elevator workings, plumbing material, awning colours, bridge suspensions, building works, machinery. Meanwhile the novel's emotional story is rather stilled, as Martin falls passively into marriage with Caroline, who is "tense and languorous", an unsettling combination. The poignant fact is that it is her sister, Emmeline, with whom Martin has an intellectual bond; it is she who hears his great plans as he conceives them.

The novel thrums with the animated prose, with which Millhauser canvasses his city and the dreams of his dreamer. Millhauser is fascinated by the way New York simultaneously colonised the sky as well as the underground. New York is "a fierce and magical city of moving iron, while along the trembling avenues there rose, in the clashing air, higher and higher still, buildings". Like the city's designers, Martin wants to build hotels that grow ever higher even as they burrow further underground — where his hotels nurture whole submerged department stores and pleasure gardens.

Millhauser's imagination is drawn to worlds within worlds (museums, arcades, circuses), and so the hotel — in its 19th century sense providing permanent as well as transient residence — is an ideal metaphor. Martin's ambition becomes explicitly godlike: like the designers of the Titanic, he wants the Grand Cosmo to have every luxury, every diversion. In fact he wants it to have everything; Martin succumbs to "a yearning for the exhaustive, which was the secret malady of the age".

Finally, fiction and ambition spin out of control, and Martin's wonderful Grand Cosmo leaves the map of the real, taking Martin with it.

140 11 20 15 16



ILLUSTRATION: BARRY LARKING

Leave it to the beaver

Paul Evans

IN THE mid-17th century, the poet Christopher Smart pleaded "for the introduction of new creatures into this island. I pray God for the ostriches of Salisbury Plain, the beavers of the Medway and silver fish of Thames". Ostriches and silver fishes apart, if ever there was a creature that belongs in Britain, it is the lovable beaver.

The 12th century writer Giraldus Cambrensis gave a detailed account of beavers but said they had disappeared from Britain with the exception of the Teifi river in Wales and an unknown river in Scotland. Their wooded, streamside habitat destroyed, and hunted mercilessly for their fur and scent glands, beavers had, by the middle ages, become semi-fabulous beasts whose fur was imported to make hats.

The Eurasian beaver, *Castor fiber*, our largest rodent weighing up to 35kg, is thought to have survived in Scotland until the 16th century. In 19th century Europe isolated beaver populations hung on in the Elbe basin in Germany, the Rhône basin in France, and southern Norway. Small numbers remained in Belarus, Russia and Mongolia. Since the 1920s, and particularly during the

last 30 years or so, 14 European countries have been establishing new colonies of the toothy, flat-tailed rodents through reintroductions from these remaining populations. The European population of beavers currently numbers about 160,000, with at least 100,000 in former Soviet Union countries.

Britain may have been the first country in Western Europe to lose its beavers. It has certainly been one of the last to do anything about it. Until now. After at least 400 years of extinction, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has launched a public consultation process to negotiate the return of the natives.

After a feasibility study, SNH has concluded that Scotland could support a wild population of up to 1,000 beavers and favours the river catchments and lochs of the Ness, Lomond, Tay, Spey, Dee and Don for reintroduction. Although recent polls have shown that two-thirds of Scots want the beavers back, SNH is at pains to gather further support against pressure from powerful landowners.

The Scottish Landowners Federation (SLF) are not openly hostile, but they're not eager either. "I'm open-minded," says Hugh Campbell Adamson of the SLF, "but we must

be sure that in 50 to 100 years' time we won't have the same problems as with grey squirrels and coypu. There's a risk of river erosion, flooding of farmland, damage to trees and damage to fishing interests. It's naive to expect the beaver to slot back into the countryside after so long, and it might pose an unacceptable risk."

Scientists who have studied European re-introductions think these concerns are unfounded, and fisheries' experts say that beavers will actually enhance fishing. Thanks to a European Union Habitats and Species directive that mandates the British government to reinstate extinct species where feasible, the beaver has the law on its side.

For Alan Watson Featherstone, executive director of Trees For Life, bringing back beavers has a much greater significance. "Humans have derailed evolution in Scotland by destroying the ecosystem and leaving wreckage of the natural forest scattered," he says.

"Bringing back the beaver is a significant step to putting back the pieces so that evolution can take its own course again. Reinstating forest animals like the beaver touches people physically and spiritually and is wholeheartedly welcomed."

Chess Leonard Barden

OXBRIDGE chess players have become pragmatic. The annual varsity match, which launched many future GM and IM pros during the Bobby Fischer boom of the seventies, now features nascent economists, scientists and mathematicians. This year Oxford's top board, Dharshan Kumar, is a grandmaster and a double junior world champion, but he was just a student taking a day off from his medical studies.

Chess can still offer tangible rewards if you are lucky as well as talented. Cambridge's third board, Harriet Hunt, who won the 1997 world girls under-20, was probably the first reigning world champion to take part in the venerable annual series that began in 1873, when Steinitz and Zukertort were spectators.

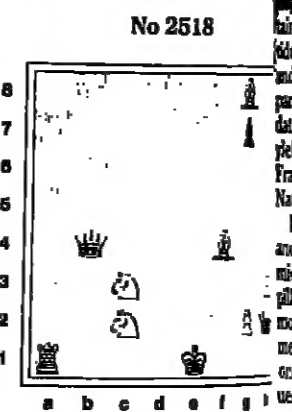
Oxford's second board, Jonathan Rowson, has found his personal code of gold in the shape of an anonymous backer who has financed \$5,000 matches at which the 20-year-old Scot has so far beaten a GM and an IM. And the backer is getting more ambitious: Rowson's next six-game series will be against Michael Adams, a mismatch for the British number one, but a great opportunity for an economics student.

Last month's varsity match was sponsored by Tony Buzan of the Brain Trust, and staged in traditionally elegant ambience at the RAC Club in Pall Mall, London. Oxford won 5-3 to reduce its overall deficit to 49-50, with 17 draws. The chess was excellent. Kumar, Rowson and Hunt all won in impressive style, possibly the highest quality play on the top boards in the match's long history.

J Rowson v B Kelly

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 d6 6 Be3 a6 7 Qd2 Nf6 8 O-O O-O Be7 9 f4 O-O 10 Be2 Bd7 11 g4 Nxd4 12

Qxd4 Bc6 13 g5 Nd7 14 Rg1 e5 15 fxe5 Nxe5 16 Rg3 Nd7 17 Bc4? After normal Sicilian Defence foreplay where White advances menacingly on the Bk Black sets up a central strategy. Bb5 persuades Black to exchange off his outpost knight. Nxc4 If Bxc4 18 Qxd4 Rxd4 19 Qxb7 18 Qxc4 b5 19 Qb3 Qd7 20 g6 Forcing open lines and venting a queen swap that could activate Black's bishop pair. Qd1 21 gch7+ Kh8 22 Bd4 Qd6 23 Rdd8 26 Rg4 Qb4 27 Rg3 Qd5 28 Rdd1 g6 29 h4 Kd7 30 Qd5 Rg8 31 Rg5 Kh6 32 e5 dxe5 33 Qd4 Kg7 Kelly, the best young player in Ireland, has defeated the colliery but here Qd4 34 Rg1 g2 better chance as White's knight is vulnerable. 34 h5g6 h5g6 35 Re7 Bxe4 36 Qxe4 Kf8 37 Re5 Rdd8 38 Qb4 Qd6 39 Rb1 40 Re7+ Resigns.



The black king is missing from the board, so where it be placed for it to be checkmate in one move? This other puzzle by W Keyn is harder than it looks, is a good test of chess logic and has caught strong players.

No 2517: 1 Rf6 (threat 2 Rf6 g1) 2 Rf6g1. If h2 2 Rf6 h2 3 Rh6. If Kh2 2 Rf6 Kh1 3 Rxd3.

Rugby Union Five Nations Championship: Wales 0 France 51

French fire engulfs all nations

Robert Armstrong at Wembley

RANCE, clicking through the gears like a custom-built sports car, brushed aside Wales with an awesome display of running on Sunday that underlined their 20 g6 Forcing open lines and venting a queen swap that could activate Black's bishop pair. Qd1 21 gch7+ Kh8 22 Bd4 Qd6 23 Rdd8 26 Rg4 Qb4 27 Rg3 Qd5 28 Rdd1 g6 29 h4 Kd7 30 Qd5 Rg8 31 Rg5 Kh6 32 e5 dxe5 33 Qd4 Kg7 Kelly, the best young player in Ireland, has defeated the colliery but here Qd4 34 Rg1 g2 better chance as White's knight is vulnerable. 34 h5g6 h5g6 35 Re7 Bxe4 36 Qxe4 Kf8 37 Re5 Rdd8 38 Qb4 Qd6 39 Rb1 40 Re7+ Resigns.

It was obvious that France have absorbed the dynamic lessons of the Northern Hemisphere rugby as the Welsh struggled to maintain a semblance of dignity amid the tide of blue shirts. Pace, flexibility and the ability to attack from any part of the field provided the foundations of a high-scoring style that yielded seven tries and earned France the right to brandish the Five Nations trophy on Wembley's turf.

Poor Wales, without Scott Gibbs and Allan Bateman to shore up their midfield, resembled so many red gladiators, such was their lack of mobility. True, Robert Howley's men did raise the tempo in the second half, but the scoreboard continued to reflect France's authority.

These Castagnède was the multi-skilled architect of his side's

bewildering patterns of attack, tormenting Welsh defenders with abrupt changes of pace, precise transfers long and short, and an uncanny awareness of when to go for the jugular. In Philippe Carboneau, the blond-haired French No 10, he had a resourceful half-back partner who cleared the ball away from the breakdown with an efficiency that would appeal to the All Blacks.

While the French back row, smoothly propelled by the driving of Olivier Magne on the open side, manufactured the bullets for their backs to fire, their counterparts got involved in foul play. Colin Charvis, Stuart Davies and Rob Appleyard were each yellow-carded, as was the France centre Stéphane Glas.

Wales had suffered an embarrassing 42-7 defeat by New Zealand at Wembley in the autumn, yet this latest setback will be even more painful to absorb, coming only a month after their record 60-24 defeat by England at Twickenham. The green shoots of promise shown by the Welsh team who defeated Ireland and Scotland were trampled underfoot by the likes of full-back Jean-Luc Sadourny and the wing Xavier Garbajosa, who each scored two excellent tries.

England, championship runners-up, could accelerate their progress towards new-age rugby by studying French skills instead of focusing exclusively on the methods used in the southern hemisphere. Never mind Bath's European Cup success, the French produce the strongest

club sides, a tradition of excellence that has filtered through to the national set-up.

How Wales, the World Cup hosts, can repair the damage is difficult to see. Apart from the admirable Howley and a couple of tentative breaks by Neil Jenkins, who was not given his customary chance to kick penalties, there was little creative intelligence.

France were unwilling to take their foot off the pedal even though they had the match sewn up within half an hour. Their superior ability to cross the gain line, reflected in a total of 43 rucks won, against 21 by Wales, ensured that scoring options arrived at frequent intervals.

Sadourny's gilt-edged tries from short passes by Glas and Philippe Bernat-Salles in the third and 14th minutes put Wales on the rack before they could take stock. A close-range score by Thomas Lièvremont quickly followed and shortly before the interval Glas broke out of a Welsh tackle and crossed the line to put his side 29-0 in front. Christophe Lemaison's goalkicking, which brought him 16 points, seemed almost superfluous.

While Wales struggled vainly to break their duck the lively Garbajosa added a couple of tries near the beginning and end of the second half, and between times the substitute Fabien Galthié joined in the fun with a score at the posts. France performed as if programmed, while for bemused Wales it seemed the nightmare would never end.

England 35 Ireland 17

England build on rock-solid base

ENGLAND rounded off their curate's egg of a season with a victory win last Saturday that gave them their fourth successive Triple Crown and a record championship points aggregate of 146, beating by 10 the mark they set last year, writes Robert Armstrong at Twickenham. Neither achievement is likely to induce cartwheels of joy among Lawrence Dallaglio's men, whose defeat by France was for them the significant result of the tournament.

It is difficult to measure England's progress since the autumn, when they played four Tests without a win, but as their coach Clive Woodward pointed out, their victories over Wales, Scotland and Ireland have developed a modest reservoir of self-belief for the summer tour to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Ireland ended up with the wooden spoon despite reserving their best displays for France and England. But their vibrant, gutsy performance here, embellished by Chris Hickie's splendid brace of tries, will have persuaded traditionalists and television producers that the Five Nations is in robust health.

England deserved their success because their defence was rock-solid when the chips were down, and they failed to make the same calculated use of the strong wind that the Irish did when it was in their favour. "When our backs were coming against the Irish backs we were very well," Woodward said, "but our forwards didn't play the game they would have liked."



Catt touchdown delight

England supporters relished the non-stop contribution of Neil Back. The Leicester flanker not only delivered the scoring pass for two of England's tries but regularly secured and recycled the ball in the face of the Irish forwards' intimidating challenge, which was not always legal.

Woodward will also have felt reassured by the resurgent form of Martin Johnson, who was in his element as he mixed it with Paddy Johns, David Corkery and Victor Costello. Corkery for his part clashed violently with Dallaglio near the end and the England captain declined to shake hands with the Irish No 6 as they walked off. Amity was restored subsequently.

It was a sign of England's uncertainty in the set pieces that Woodward took off Garath Archer — "he wasn't quite on his game" — in

favour of Danny Grewcock after the interval. That substitution may have been an over-reaction to the number of line-outs and turnovers won by the Irish forwards.

England had the game effectively won in the first half, when they built a 25-7 lead. During that period Matt Perry, Jeremy Guscott and Matt Dawson showed qualities of foresight and imagination which Woodward hopes will become second nature throughout the team before next year's World Cup.

By the start of next season Woodward will have to settle on his first-choice XV plus a support group of, say, 10 to 12 players, otherwise worries about his butterfly approach to selection will swiftly turn into full-blown fears. He should also stop asking players to step into roles that they have not previously filled even at club level.

In his first outing on the wing Mike Catt scored an important try on the stroke of half-time, but the Bath fly-half looked uncomfortable in defence, halfly surprising given the pace of Hickie, whose 35th-minute interception try kept the match alive. Earlier Guscott had set up an exciting score for Perry, and Back had put Richard Cockerill away for a thundering try.

In the second half the Irish quickly got another 10 points — Hickie's second try from Eric Elwood's reverse pass was a gem — but England responded with Paul Grayson's third penalty goal, and their substitute centre Phil de Glanville sealed the win with a thrilling touchdown.

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Another series gone with the Windies

WEST INDIES won the fourth one-day international by four wickets at St Vincent to ensure that whatever the outcome of the last match in Trinidad and Tobago skipper Brian Lara will take away the Cable & Wireless Trophy.

Batting first, England were all out in the penultimate over of the innings for 149, with wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs claiming five victims, a record between the two countries.

"We've not batted very well and have deserved to lose," said the England captain Adam Hoolioake after defeat condemned the tourists to a series loss at 3-1 down. They also lost the Test Series 3-1.

England won the first match but the home side levelled the five-match series in the most dramatic fashion when — set a victory target of 287 — they won by one wicket with a single ball remaining. The West Indies won the third game by five wickets.

HELSA, the last remaining English beacon in Europe, was in danger of being extinguished in Italy. Playing Vicenza in the first leg of the Cup Winners' Cup semi-final, Gianluca Vialli's Blues were beaten 1-0 by a Lamberto Zauli strike in the 16th minute. It was the worst performance of their European campaign. Only a series of superb saves by Ed de Goey kept the scoreline within reach for the second leg as the English team looked tired and complacent after their recent victory over Middlesbrough in the Coca-Cola Cup final.

In the other semi-final, VfB Stuttgart beat Lokomotiv Moscow 2-1.

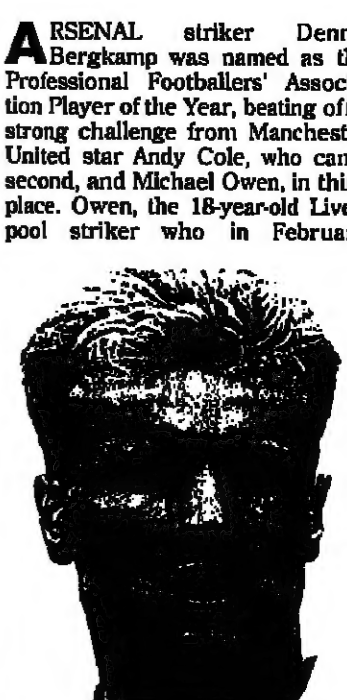
PETER NICOL of Scotland celebrated his 25th birthday in style — by becoming the first home squash player to win the British Open in 25 years. He beat Jansher Khan 17-16, 15-4, 15-4 in Birmingham to deny the Pakistani legend his seventh successive victory in the competition.

"I did not expect to break him so quickly," said Nicol, whose 58-minute success should ensure he remains the world No 1 for the rest of the year. His next target is to become the first British man to win the World Open, to be played in Bombay in December.

Michelle Martin won the women's title for the sixth successive time with a 30-minute 9-4, 9-2, 9-1 demolition of the top-seeded world champion and fellow-Australian Sarah Fitz-Gerald.

BRITAIN'S Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman completed a clean sweep over Ukraine's tennis duo Andrei Medvedev and Andrei Rybakov in the Davis Cup Euro-African Zone Group One tie at Newcastle. Both won their singles and reverse matches and also beat the Ukrainians in the doubles to triumph 5-0. The World Group beckons Britain now for the first time since 1992 but first they must enter play-offs in September. British coach John Lloyd believes the team will be vulnerable if they are drawn away on clay, but Rusedski reckons they can cope both home and away.

CRAIG BROWN renewed his contract as manager of Scotland for another four years. He succeeded Andy Roxburgh in the post in November 1993 and under his stewardship Scotland have played 38 matches, winning 20, drawing six and losing 12. He steered the side into both Euro 96 and this year's World Cup finals.



Bergkamp: top honour

became the youngest England international this century when he played against Chile, was named Young Player of the Year.

EARTH SUMMIT, trained by Nigel Twiston-Davies and ridden by jockey Carl Llewellyn, ploughed through treacle-like mud at Aintree to win a punishing Grand National by 11 lengths from top-weight Sunnys Bay. Sam Lee finished third, a distance behind, and St Mellion Flarway was fourth of the six finishers.

Llewellyn said later: "Earth Summit just kept going — I was worried, but I knew that Sunnys Bay had 12 stones to carry." This year's race, the slowest on record, was marred by an unusually high number of fatalities. Three horses never made it back to the stables after stumbling at various fences during the race, and another died later. One Man, the nation's favourite chaser, had to be put down after shattering his right hind leg in a fall at the same meeting last week.

LEE WESTWOOD, the rising star of British golf, won his first event in the United States, the New Orleans Classic. He also won \$306,000 and, perhaps more importantly, exemption from qualifying for any US Tour event for the next two years. With his 15-under-par total of 273, he won by three shots from the unknown American left-hander Steve Flesch. After only three events in the US this year he has moved to 11th in the money list, with a total of \$489,500, after finishing 13th in the Bay Hill Invitational and fifth in the Players Championship.

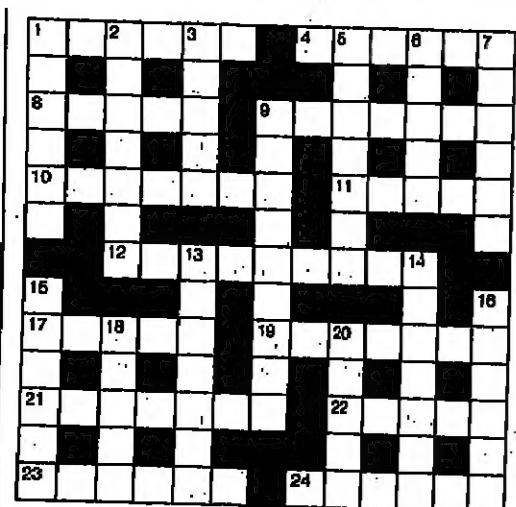
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Quick crossword no. 413

Across

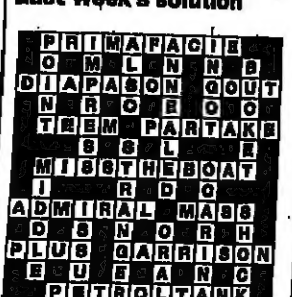
- 1 Small marsupial (6)
- 2 Wading bird (8)
- 3 Animal like short-necked giraffe (5)
- 4 Animal of the weasel family (7)
- 5 Dreamlike, bizarre (7)
- 6 Kind of gazelle (5)
- 7 Aquatic rodent (5,4)
- 8 Antelope resembling an elk (5)
- 9 Nemalode invertebrate (7)
- 10 Person's attractive quality (7)
- 11 World's most populous country (5)
- 12 Team — number (6)
- 13 Paruvian llama (6)

- 1 French novelist, Marcel (6)
- 2 Common bird (7)
- 3 Cornish (6)
- 4 No vocal (anag) — may blow his top (7)
- 5 Spherical bacteria (5)



Last week's solution

- 7 Gossip (6)
- 8 White, erotic animal (5,4)
- 9 Immature frog (7)
- 10 Archaic literature (7)
- 11 Small hound (6)
- 12 South African antelope (6)
- 13 Astound (6)
- 14 Neighbourhood — pub (5)



Bridge Zia Mahmood

I AM NOT a great fan of double dummy problems, or the par contests that used to be popular many years ago. Such exercises are far removed from the kind of bridge I find stimulating — the thrill of improvising at the table, of finding psychological solutions based on the human element, rather than computer-like technical plays. Achieving par is all very well, but beating par is better still — and you can't do that until you first learn to play the game naturally, using the rules of good technique but not living by them all the time.

The greatest exponent of this bridge philosophy was the late Irving Rose, who would have been 60 years old in February but for his untimely death. Irving excelled at both the psychological and the technical side of bridge, but he greatly preferred to win by some bold and imaginative coup than by a laboriously calculated percentage play. Try to match his style on the hand below. You are the dealer at rubber bridge, with the score at game all.

AKJ 1086432 ♥ 3 ♦ None ♠ 962

I'd expect your opening bid to depend on what kind of player you

are: four spades for the solid, middle-of-the-road type; one spade for the scientist, leaving room to explore the road ahead; three spades for the ultra-conservative in belt and braces; two spades (Weak? Strong? Who cares?) for the imaginative. None of these appealed in the least to Rose, who passed! West on his left opened with one heart, North passed, and East bid two clubs. The stage was set for Irving, who bid three spades — not four spades, for that would sound too suspicious. That could wait until the next round, when it might appear that he really was sacrificing. West bid four diamonds, which North doubled for penalties, creating a perfect situation for Irving. His four spades bid would surely now be taken as a cry of abject weakness. So it was, for West doubted it and all passed to complete a memorable auction.

South West North East
Rose Pass 1♥ Pass 2♣
3♠ 4♥ 5♠ 6♥
4♠ Dble All pass

West led the king of hearts, and North put down an eminently suitable dummy:

North
♥ 75
♦ A 10 9 8 7
♣ K J 10 5
♠ J 10

West
♥ None
♦ K Q J 6 5 2
♣ A Q 9 6 3
♠ Q 5

South
♥ A K J 10 8 6 4 3 2
♦ 3
♣ None
♠ 9 6 2

Winning the opening lead with dummy's ace, Rose led the king of clubs. East won with the king and switched to a trump, but Rose was that in his hand and played a second club. The defence was helpless. West won with the queen, he trumped to play to prevent a club ruff in dummy, while if East overtook the queen with the ace to play a spade, no club ruff would be needed. The nine would be a matter of course, if Irving had opted for spades, West would probably have overcalled five hearts and gone 1,100 instead of the actual 500. But nearly as satisfying.